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TWO SINNERS.¹

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CHAPTER I.

CLOSE by the railings of the Brighton Parade, at the unfashionable end near Sussex Square, Maud Monckton stood watching the sea and sky. All that February afternoon the sun had been slipping very slowly down an unclouded blue sky till at last it reached the blue sea-line. Then a strange thing happened !

It did—actually—seem to touch the horizon line, and the red globe suddenly bulged out on either side as if it was no real planet, but some monstrous ball of crimson blood hanging in our atmosphere, actually touching the waters of our channel ; an awful portent of some unexpected catastrophe.

Maud looked on amazed by the apparition. As instantaneously as thought flashes into being, something within this ominous ball, something, the heart of it—its nucleus—moved slowly through its flaming bulging skirts and disappeared into the void, leaving behind it on the horizon only the empty shallow crimson husk, the wreck of the spectator's own illusion.

Maud still gazed motionless, and in another moment this splendid husk shrank, collapsed into a narrow streak of fire, glittered, and was gone, gone—both Truth—and Illusion.

The spell was over, Maud moved her eyes at last slowly over the sky and sea. The whole sky glowed with what seemed to the girl's excited imagination a deep troubled resignation. The sea lay before her like a flat mucous expanse of restless thoughts giving expression to themselves in shimmering opalescence.

It was profoundly melancholy, that ending to a sunny winter

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day ; though why it was melancholy she could not tell. She turned and looked across the road to the houses.

A light flashed into a room opposite, and looked out wistfully for a second, like a human eye. Then a blind came down like an eyelid and concealed it. Another light sprang into being at another window, and yet another, only to be extinguished by some unseen hand. The traffic in the road was dwindling, sounds were striking finely, sharply, on Maud's ears through the frosty air.

She turned back once more to the sea. The wonderful restless colour was fading out of it, its troubled movements were stilled ; physical darkness was overcoming them, and wrapping them round with the oblivion of the night. Maud shivered ! It was very cold ! She crossed the road and stood for a moment at the house opposite, where she lodged with her two sisters. Then she turned and walked westwards, keeping her eyes on the twinkling lights that ran out to the distant pier-head : thinking as she walked. Her face with its small, handsome, and rather arrogant features, half hidden by her veil, were full of perplexity, dislike of her present life, doubt as to whether the step she was about to take was justifiable. That step was—marriage.

She had concealed in her muff a letter which, if posted, would settle her future decisively. The letter in her muff was addressed to : ' Major Kames, Princes Hotel, Brighton.'

It was an answer to a letter from him, not so badly expressed—considering that he must have written many love-letters during the twenty years of his adolescence, and must have exhausted some of the usual forms of speech. He said that he loved her, as he had never expected to be able to love any human being. That, of course, was not an unusual preliminary. Then he said he knew that he had faults. That sentence Maud resented. Of course he had faults ! She was going to correct them for him ! No ; what he really meant was to apologise for not being young. That fault could never be corrected, alas !

He said that his wealth had acquired a new value in his eyes because it would enable him to give her a really good time. Now this expression a ' really good time ' jarred on her pride. It was clear to Maud that he considered that, although on the one side *he* had faults, yet on *her* side she was having far from a ' good time ' with her two sisters in seaside lodgings. Major Kames was pluming himself on his power to give her what she could not get without him —him—with all his faults.

Now Maud longed for a ' really good time,' but she wanted it

without the unnecessary obligation of being grateful to anybody for it—because that hurt the ‘pride’ of which we have already spoken. So when she had sat down in her cold little bedroom looking over dismal backs, she had taken pen in hand and had written to Major Kames in lofty style, as if his wealth was on the whole a drawback to their marriage, and she accepted him in spite of it. Having written the letter, the only question was, should she post it? She had been walking on the parade for nearly three-quarters of an hour and was still racked with uncertainty as to whether she disliked her present life so keenly that to escape it she was willing to marry Major Kames.

So, his real faults were that he was forty, and that he was—not exactly—vulgar—but—! He was one of those men whose presence in a room can never be ignored. His ideas came to him spasmodically, and were pronounced in forcible language. People whose minds moved slowly considered him very clever and a little confusing; but he made them feel that ‘something was going on.’ The air stirred when he was there.

But if Kames had faults, he had also inexhaustible good humour, and a capacity for keeping in order the wealth he had inherited. Are not these two qualities priceless in a husband?

So, what should Maud do? Maud looked little older than twenty-three, but she was really twenty-eight, perilously near twenty-nine. Time was flying.

Time had already flown away with her sister Ursula. Poor darling Ursula with her high-bridged nose and eyeglasses, her face worn into rather rigid lines, and her complexion dulled by her forty years of careful responsibility and her fight against poverty.

Time had only begun with Stella, their half-sister. Stella was twenty-one, and she had always attracted men. Marriage was certain for her. She had, indeed, nearly captured Major Kames; at least she had discovered him at a friend’s house, she had shaken her turquoise earrings at him, had monopolised him, and then in an unlucky moment had tried the effect of singing to him in her high soprano, he playing her accompaniment. When that performance was over Major Kames had closed the piano—rather a rude thing to do—and from that moment Stella observed what she ought to have seen before, that the wealthy and somewhat fleshy warrior was really interested in Maud.

It had taken Stella some few days to recover from the shock, and when she did recover she fled from the scene of her defeat to their aunt, Lady Dorothy Broughton. From Lady Dorothy’s

home in Brown Street she had written a letter to Ursula hinting mysteriously that she thought younger sisters, especially half-sisters, were sometimes in the way.

But the second letter she had written had contained no pessimistic remarks, it had been cheerful and affectionate. She had returned home that very afternoon in February of which we speak, and her blue eyes (that matched the earrings) looking enigmatic.

Maud having written, but not yet having posted, the letter to Major Kames, wondered—hoped—that Stella had forgiven her.

The letter was not yet posted. It lay in Maud's muff, and the more Maud thought about it the more difficult it was to decide whether it should be posted at all.

One thing only was absolutely clear to her. She hated Brighton, and every day it became more likely that Ursula would discover a house that would be cheap enough for them to take and settle in. Maud could picture the sort of house—in a side street, overlooking other small houses. There would certainly be euonymus bushes in front and behind, and a square of dank grass called by the house-agent—a garden. They would have one maid, of that non-humorous kind, who, being unable to do anything, undertakes to do everything.

Maud could picture Ursula, counting the pence, almost counting the coals. She would if anyone could, make the small income left to her unconditionally by their father, General Monckton, go as far as possible; her aim being always to let Maud and Stella have their own pensions entirely for their clothes. Maud could imagine Ursula sitting by the dining-room table, working the sewing-machine vigorously, oblivious of the dreariness of their surroundings, happy in making clothes for Stella. Maud could imagine Stella, who, in spite of both sisters' help and constant gentle admonitions, was always shabby under her finery—she could imagine Stella talking about the distinguished musical career that she *ought* to find waiting for her, and meanwhile making the cramped house still more cramped by evolving, Heaven knows how, an inexplicable confusion out of order, wherever she moved. It was Stella's habit to sleep in her turquoise earrings; the only way to be sure of not losing them.

Maud could imagine that 'home' of theirs. To settle down in such surroundings seemed like giving up youth, hope, romance. Maud had walked some little distance along the house side of the parade, and was opposite a pillar box. She had only to put the letter to Major Kames into that box, and she would have Orpenden House

in Surrey as her home—only—and there was the point—only with Major Kames as her husband.

What had Maud done that she should have found no man to love her but Major Kames? Should she brave the future, share Ursula's home and poverty, and try to make the best of it?

Maud fingered the letter in her muff. Why had she not written a letter of refusal and put both in her muff, so that she could post one, or the other? She had only written one letter—accepting Major Kames. That looked as if, down within the depths of her heart, she meant to accept him, and all these arguments were only meant to silence the conscience that clamoured for some justifiable course of action, and urged that the moral nature must be satisfied.

Maud drew out the letter. The envelope was beginning to get a little bent. No wonder! Would it be a great shock to Ursula if she married Major Kames? Had Ursula any suspicions that she meant to accept Major Kames? Ursula had behaved all through as if there could be no question of anything serious between her and Major Kames. Maud had always known, but she had refused to recognise the truth till this moment when it rushed peremptorily through her mind, that Ursula had taken for granted that Maud would never dream of marrying Major Kames! And yet in the first few days of their acquaintance with him, when Stella monopolised him and raved about him, Ursula had not disapproved—she had even allowed that he was wonderfully genial. But when Kames had shown his cards, and had openly paid attention to Maud, Ursula had observed a sudden reticence in her behaviour towards him. Was it because she thought him a worldling?

The hot blood rushed to Maud's head as she stood, letter in hand, by the pillar box. Ursula had always expected more of her than of Stella—more self-control, more refinement. Was that fair?

General Monckton's second marriage had been with a charming, emotional, weak little woman who had died at Stella's birth. Ursula had brought the child up from its cradle, taking for granted, somehow, that she would not be a real Monckton in character, and must have allowances made for that fact. So Stella might marry a worldling and be excused, but Maud might not. Was that fair?

Maud put the letter back in her muff. She must not stand still in the growing dusk, attracting attention to herself—she must walk on. She would walk a little and then come back again and post the letter.

Now, what exactly was wrong with Major Kames? She would think it over carefully. His father had been a successful tradesman.

Very well. Many of our peers are only too glad to marry into tradesmen's families. Kames had left the Army. Yes, but it was necessary, his property needed looking after ; there was nothing improper in that. Then he did most things well, business matters especially ; he was a good sportsman, expert at cards ; he was a bit of a real musician. All this was surely in his favour. Then he was good-natured to the very core. Yes—yes—but he was not 'serious,' and he had not one scrap of what is called 'spiritual' in him. Maud, in imagination, as she walked along, could almost hear him, in his low, rapid voice, saying, 'I know what you mean by emotional, or what you mean by intellectual, but what the deuce do you mean by spiritual ? '

Major Kames called himself an 'on the whole Agnostic,' but Maud suspected that a practical and personal observation of human life had led him to believe that there was no Deity superintending the march of the universe. Yes, but Maud's father, General Monckton, had been actually anti-religious, while, on the other hand, Major Kames had no objection to going to church—on occasions. For instance, Maud was certain that he would want to be married by an Anglican priest, and that he would ridicule the idea of a purely secular ceremonial in a registry office, just as he would object to going into a vegetarian restaurant.

The lighted pier and the long line of lamp-posts were growing more and more sharp and starlike—though the night was not dark.

As she walked, a man passed her leading a black greyhound on a leash, and close behind, though loose, trotted a second greyhound exactly like the first. The pair wore little tan coats, both had their long thin faces meekly bent, their tails curled humbly under their slender bodies, and they moved with a curiously light elastic step as if scarcely needing to touch the pavement, all their amazing power of swiftness subdued to lowly obedience.

They were so gentle and so disciplined that Maud strained her eyes after them sympathetically. How much happier, how much simpler, life would be if, like the dog, one could find some higher being visible to the sight and touch, whose will one could trust absolutely. As it was, God and immortality were uncertain ; perhaps all our moral struggles might end in—nothing ; perhaps those who enjoyed this life to the full were really the wisest ?

As she walked looking into the dusk as far as her sight would reach, she suddenly became aware of a figure coming towards her. It was impossible to mistake that walk. The walk was that of

high and deliberate respectability. It was Ursula. She had just come out of St. Cuthbert's from one of Father Fitzherbert's Lenten addresses. The figure became more distinct. Now Maud could see that it was tall and angular. She could see the familiar black leather bag in which Ursula carried a book of devotions, her purse, and sundry keys. Ursula had never fallen under her father's influence; she was of a type peculiar to England, a type that forms the very backbone of the race, self-controlled in every act and thought, religious, austere and unattractively dressed.

Should Maud turn and fly, and fling her letter into the pillar box as she passed it? There was time, for Ursula was short-sighted.

No, to fly from Ursula would be a silly thing—a sort of cowardice. If Maud married Major Kames, well, she would marry him, and brave it out. She would post the letter at that pillar box; she would slip it in before Ursula's very eyes, though she would not explain, say to whom it was addressed, just then—not just immediately.

'How delightful of you to come to meet me!' said Ursula, now face to face with her sister.

Maud turned without answering, for she felt a sudden lump in her throat. She passed her arm through her sister's.

'How light it is; the moon must have risen,' said Ursula.

'I've been watching the sunset,' said Maud, 'while you've been listening to the exciting oratory of Father Fitzherbert.'

'He talks very quietly,' said Ursula. 'I wish you could come with me next Friday.'

'I would, dear, only I can't,' said Maud; 'I can't go and add one more to the crowd of women who listen to him and worship. I don't like these spiritual men, they get too much flattery from women.' She spoke with a certain bitterness, because the thought of Major Kames lay behind the word 'spiritual.' 'I'm quite sure that all of them—except you—would give anything to drag him down to the level of a sacerdotal flirtation.'

'Poor things,' murmured Ursula. 'Maud, do you know I went to [look at a house before going into church!']'

Maud's heart began to beat swiftly.

'Oh,' she said, 'did you?'

'A little house, next the corner one in Athelstane Place. It faces west, and it is three minutes from St. Cuthbert's.'

'Oh,' said Maud.

'And the rent—what do you think?'

'I really can't guess,' said Maud.

'Thirty-five pounds,' said Ursula, but her voice had changed—it was tentative, she saw that something was wrong.

'Ah, yes,' said Maud—'thirty-five pounds!'

'A little garden behind,' said Ursula slowly.

'Euonymus bushes in front?' said Maud desperately.

'No, behind,' said Ursula.

'And what in front?'

'Nothing in front except an iron paling.'

'Oh,' said Maud.

There came a break in the line of the parade and a side street. A large motor-brougham was turning off the parade into the side street, so the sisters had to pause for a moment at the edge of the curb, while it passed them.

The moon had suddenly appeared above the roof of the houses, and its broad light flooded the parade and the sea. The tide was going down, and some low rocks were visible at the surface of the water. The two sisters looked across the road at the shimmering silver of the sea and these black shining patches, and, as they did so, they could see clearly a man's figure striding along by the parade railings. Maud shrank into herself. Ursula glanced away. Here was the very man who was troubling both their thoughts. It was Major Kames! His soft felt hat was tilted over his eyes. In spite of the training of his youth, he slouched a little.

He had seen them and raised his hat, and for the flash of a moment they saw his strong, fleshy features and black hair. Maud thought she saw his brown, staring eyes. Something in his presence, though so far off, made her shiver. She felt Ursula's arm stiffen slightly. He walked on, and the two sisters crossed the road to the opposite pavement. Here stood the pillar box. Maud had now decided that she would pass it without posting her letter.

'We could get the house at the quarter—that is, in six or seven weeks' time,' said Ursula with a slight break in her voice. 'It would be a good thing to settle as quickly as we can, because our lodgings are expensive, and I really need all the money I can save for our start. Even though we have enough furniture to more than fill the house, there are a hundred small expenses—carpets altering and so on.'

'I've got a letter to post,' interrupted Maud. 'I mean—'

She almost stumbled against Ursula as she spoke.

'I don't know that it matters much,' she said. 'Let's see what is the next delivery? Six o'clock? It's past that already.'

Ursula had stopped and was looking at her sister. Maud was fumbling with a letter at the box opening, as if she couldn't find it. She was rapidly making up her mind now, for the last time. If she accepted Major Kames she would soon find out whether he was endurable, and if he proved unendurable she could break off the engagement. It would be quite fair, for how on earth is one to tell beforehand? Now, that was her decision—it was final!

She slipped the letter in, and heard it drop to the bottom of the box.

It was done!

She went back to Ursula, and took her arm again; her cheeks burned like fire, and her feet moved feverishly. Ursula said no more about the little house at thirty-five pounds a year! She was silent, till at last she said:

'You never met Aunt Dorothy's nephew by marriage, Dr. George Broughton, Maud?'

Ursula's voice sounded as though she was forcing herself to speak.

'No,' said Maud, 'not that I remember.'

'Stella met him at Aunt Dorothy's. He was at Cambridge; he's now got some science post in London. He's here, at Brighton, just for one night, I believe, and Stella has asked him to come to see us this evening.'

The two women walked on together in silence.

So this explained Stella's enigmatic look when she arrived! Had she been travelling down with Dr. George Broughton? Had Stella possibly consoled herself for the loss of Major Kames? 'Men, men, men, always men,' sighed Maud. And what of Ursula, for whom no man cared?

They walked into their lodgings, up the narrow stairs, and went into their sitting-room. The lights were not turned on. Stella was there in a low chair by the fire smoking a cigarette. Although she found punctuality impossible, and also unnecessary, she was already dressed for the evening, and yet it was not half-past six! Her black hair was very carefully arranged with elaborate combs, she was wearing her blue-satin dress, her blue earrings of course, and she was stretching out a pair of very smart shoes to the blaze. Shadows flickered over Stella's face, dimming its clear freshness, the dimples in her cheeks deepened a little as she turned her head and looked at her step-sisters.

'You look as if you'd both been converted,' she remarked, as she blew a puff of smoke into the air.

Maud took off her gloves and veil with deliberate care. She had now a part to play, and she must control her emotions.

'So we look like that, do we?' she replied. She glanced into the mirror over the mantelpiece. She saw there in the uncertain moving light and darkness her own face, the small, well-cut, proud features, clear, pale complexion, hair and eyes a light brown. She could see the unusual flush on her cheeks, and she put up both her hands to them.

'I haven't been to hear Father Fitzherbert,' she said. As she spoke she turned and looked at Ursula, who had remained standing behind her, silent.

Was it only the firelight that gave her sister's face that grey look, and brought out all the lines in her face?

'Have you been listening to that man all this afternoon, poor dear?' asked Stella, looking first at Ursula and then at her cigarette-end attentively.

Maud moved away to the door.

'No,' said Ursula, 'I was looking at a house—first.'

'A house!' said Stella. 'Yes, of course.' She stared into the fire and began smoking again, and Maud opened the door and went out.

CHAPTER II.

As soon as dinner was over, Maud slipped away and went to her room. The conversation had been mostly in Stella's hands. She had told her rather silent half-sisters the latest news about their Aunt Dorothy and her dog—the dog that had partially consoled her after the death of her husband, Mr. Broughton; the dog that everybody except Lady Dorothy thought an intolerable nuisance.

Maud had laughed a good deal, and now she was thankful that dinner was over. But there was still the evening to get through and George Broughton to meet, and it flashed across her mind that if Major Kames got her letter by the nine o'clock post there was nothing to prevent his coming at ten, and then—Maud's hands grew as cold as ice.

Almost unconsciously through her father's influence, Maud had very early in life dropped the old-fashioned optimism of orthodox Christianity, which pictures this life as a racecourse, and the future life as a goal where a prize awaits each human soul if it cares to strive for it. Almost without mental effort she had adopted the more fashionable optimism of the present day—the belief that we

are running, not a race, but a helter-skelter, merely for the sake of running, and because evolution has provided us with legs.

While she was still in the buoyancy of her youth she considered her sister Ursula's desire for personal immortality an unnecessary weakness. Maud thought it strange and more sensible for Humanity to want nothing better than to run from somewhere to nowhere in particular. Why shouldn't people enjoy climbing a ladder that has a sort of a kind of a bottom, but no top? It showed a proper sort of courage!

Any doubt as to the satisfactoriness of this form of exercise she called pessimism, for was not mere living a hazy sunshine of joyful possibilities? She called Ursula playfully, 'The Pessimist.' But as time went on this misty youthful happiness melted away, and left her face to face with a hard bare fact that she had not anticipated—her girlhood had gone for ever. What had that to do with 'Life'?—why did that matter? It *did* matter, horribly. At every step of the past she had been attended by a kind of sympathetic interest that the world takes in a pretty unmarried girl. In a year or two, the world would pass her by with that peculiar sort of indifference that is meted out to the 'superfluous woman.'

Why should she mind that? Why should people mind being ignored? It doesn't prevent them from running from 'somewhere to nowhere in particular.'

When she had to tell Ursula of her engagement, could she say that she had accepted Major Kames in order to escape from a haunting fear of dying husbandless and childless? In other words, that the optimism she had boasted of did not go very deep?

Could she confess this to any man or woman? Certainly not, and least of all could she confess it to Ursula, because it would wound her to the heart. Maud's thoughts flashed over the lives of the unmarried women she knew; almost all, except Ursula's, seemed to her obviously cramped by the repression of the great human emotions. Ursula believed that a Father in Heaven watched over her—that gave her courage.

Why could not Maud believe that? Maud paced up and down her room: all that she could believe was that Man has emerged painfully from an unknown past, and has found a sinister welcome awaiting him:

'Time with a gift of tears;
Grief with a glass that ran—'

Maud heard the front-door bell ring. Her heart stood still. It could not be Major Kames ! Her letter could not have reached him yet, and he would not dare to call until he knew what that letter contained. She could hear a light step on the stairs and a voice, very different from Major Kames', say to the maid : 'Mr. Broughton.' He must be tall and interesting-looking, with that voice.

She went to the mirror and looked at herself. Tears that had tried to come she had beaten back, her eyes were dry, her cheeks as flushed as they had been before dinner. She felt nervous and excited. Before going into the sitting-room should she ring the bell and tell the maid not to admit Major Kames if he called ? That would be a strange way of treating the man you have just promised to accept as your husband ! She sat down at a little table and scribbled off a note :

'DEAR MAJOR KAMES,—

I have not told my sisters yet of our engagement.
Will you come to-morrow and see me ?

'Yours ever,

MAUD MONCKTON.'

Was 'Yours ever' the proper thing to write ? It certainly was not too cordial. 'Yours affectionately' would sound silly and wasn't true. No doubt people in love were able to invent something suitable. 'Yours ever' must stand. It wasn't actually a lie—she was 'Yours ever' of a sort.

She folded up the note and addressed it. Then she rang the bell and gave the letter to the maid and told her to give it to Major Kames if he called. Now she was safe—till to-morrow.

Now she would go and see what this cousin of theirs was like. He was the nearest approach to a cousin she and her sisters had : would she when she saw him really feel envious of Stella ? How young, how full of energy, how cultured that voice had sounded ! She left her room.

She could hear his voice in their sitting-room, he was talking just as if he was describing something. The mere sound was extraordinarily pleasant—empty sound as it was. She turned the handle of the door and went in.

He was standing in front of the fire, between Stella and Ursula, who were seated on either side, Stella doing nothing, Ursula, as usual, working.

He was tall, and erect, and slim ; his face when Maud entered was bent towards Stella.

He raised his head instantly and glanced across at the newcomer, with eyes that looked out from under level brows, eyes that were speculative, almost wistful. It was a face full of ability, though highly nervous, regular in features, dark, with thick brown hair growing low on a broad brow.

'I have the honour to be,' he said, coming forward to shake hands with Maud, 'your aunt Dorothy's husband's brother's second son.'

He was smiling, but his eyes widened with an expression that meant surprise and approbation. Perhaps he had expected Maud to look like Ursula—taking for granted that Stella would have two plain step-sisters like Cinderella in the fairy story.

'Yes, I know,' said Maud. 'It's very odd that we have never seen you before,' and she turned away and looked about for a chair. There seemed to be no chairs in the room, and yet the room was full of chairs.

Broughton moved forward with a rapid, graceful movement, and seizing a chair pulled it just opposite to the hearth-rug, so that now when he went back to his position against the mantelpiece he looked down on a little triangle of women.

Maud seated herself demurely. She stared for a moment at her own lap, then at as much of the fire as she could see on each side of Broughton's legs, and then finally up at his face, and this was what her eyes had intended all along, for it fascinated her.

He was again looking down at Stella, and Stella, leaning back in her low chair, with her turquoise earrings slanting into her hair, wore an air of gentle self-righteousness touched with sorrow for the world that had not understood her talent. Maud knew the expression well. It appeared whenever Stella was conscious of being admired.

Maud's eyes glanced over Stella's blue satin to her blue stockings and the shimmer of the smart shoes that covered up a neat darn, a darn made by Maud herself, for Stella frankly preferred holes. So Stella knew that she was being admired ; what were her feelings to George Broughton in return ?

'Go on talking,' said Ursula, glancing up from her work at her new-found cousin.

'I'm afraid I've been shamelessly egotistical,' said Broughton, glancing at Maud with an air of apology, 'but I've been spoiled

long ago by the interest Stella takes in science, and have been dosing her and Ursula with my new work at the laboratory before you came in.'

Stella interested in science! Maud was amazed at the news. Nothing in the world bored Stella so much as anything to do with science, or religion, or what she called 'stodge.'

'Science is too thrilling,' said Stella, and the dimples in her cheeks grew very deep.

'I'm sure it is,' said Maud, with a slight smile; 'it must be thrilling to feel that you and you only have got a key to the universe.'

Broughton turned his eyes away from the direction of Stella's dimples and slowly looked Maud over. But he was not really thinking of her, his mental vision was of something in the distance, beyond her.

'It's not so easy now to think you've got a key to the universe. That's been thought too often,' he said. 'Mathematics were to solve everything, then physics, then physical chemistry, then thermodynamics. Whenever a fresh push is made in one department of science the pioneers are disposed to take themselves too seriously.'

'It's human nature,' said Maud, 'to take oneself seriously if anybody can be induced to listen to one for half a minute.'

'Aren't you rather hard on human nature?' said Broughton, smiling. 'Anyhow, the more advanced any branch of science becomes, the more we expect it to solve the problem of life or of matter; and yet this problem grows not simpler, but more and more complex, so that, instead of being able to smooth things out and reduce everything to some universal principle, the very reverse is taking place—we are busy making confusion worse confounded. The fact is that now that the light of science burns more brightly, we are becoming conscious for the first time of the increasing vastness of the dark that surrounds us, the mystery of the universe in which we find ourselves. The more we know the more we become aware that we really know nothing.'

Maud looked up at him. This man had probably no more belief in immortality, or Christ, than had Major Kames, but his unbelief was tinged with reverence—that was in itself a sort of religion—perhaps—all the religion that anyone has a right to have. And—George Broughton looked so young. Maud could not help picturing him and Major Kames standing together—Major Kames!

The silence was broken by an exclamation from Stella.

'How intensely exciting your work must be! I just wonder that you can spare the time to eat or sleep.'

Broughton burst out laughing. He was delighted at the remark, though to Maud it seemed a very silly one.

Maud shrank into herself and was silent. If Stella had said 'Bo,' he evidently would have been equally pleased. He would doubtless have discovered some strange grace and intelligence lurking in that ejaculation that had escaped the world's consciousness all these many years.

How was it that Broughton could be profoundly critical of ideas—and so uncritical about Stella?

Maud gnawed mentally at this question over and over again. Was it because he had no measure with which to weigh a woman, but the measure with which he weighed himself? Did he attribute to every human being who was kind to him the intelligence, the moral rectitude, of his own nature?

Maud glanced up at his face and felt certain that it was so.

'A great deal of one's work is dull,' he said, turning to Stella, 'because it doesn't even involve thinking. So that six or seven hours' work daily in a laboratory doesn't mean six or seven hours of concentrated thought. Nothing of the sort—it may mean mere pottering for hours, days; it may mean waiting for results, or perhaps patient attention only, observation and calculations of a mechanical kind.

'A great discovery may turn up by accident. A lucky "by-product," so to speak, may turn up in some experiment that in itself has no results. A man may work for life and do little for Science, or he may make a sudden step forward, though he has no constructive imagination. By patient attention he may hit on something that he neither expected, nor was capable of anticipating.'

'What is your particular work?' asked Maud.

'Chemistry,' he said.

Ursula sat on her side of the fire, knitting away and listening intently, glancing up at Broughton through a pair of eyeglasses stuck on her high-bridged nose. Long experience of never being admired, of never expecting to be admired, of never feeling bitter because she wasn't admired, had given Ursula a certain quiet dignity of self-forgetfulness. Of the three women, she was the only one who listened to Broughton with pure unalloyed interest in his talk for its own sake.

Stella was full of the 'pride of possession.' She was saying over

and over to herself—that though Maud had wrenched Major Kames from her grasp, she would find it impossible to capture Broughton. Stella had done her best, in fact, to make it impossible—she had hinted more than once to Broughton at Aunt Dorothy's that her sister Maud had already made her choice—a choice which was perhaps a little disappointing. Stella was strong now, in the conviction that one oughtn't to marry a man because he was wealthy—was Maud going to marry for wealth? Stella's thoughts, indeed, all the time that Broughton was talking were on this subject; and only now and again did she recover her attention sufficiently to be able to throw out vague and rather exaggerated pronouncements of sympathy.

She was arguing with herself that manly beauty and youth were 'really and truly' of far greater importance in a lover than the possession of an ancient country house, of motor-cars, of wealth that laughs at the bills of milliners and of tailors. So indeed she argued. She wanted to assure herself that she was not merely acting rightly, but was lucky—and Maud was likely to be 'unlucky.'

Stella felt that she had within her all the musical imagination that should command a brilliant career; but that society being what it is, full of ignorant prejudice and full of corruption, a woman had a better chance—sad to say—if she had wealth at her back.

If you have money, you can pay for the publication of your book—and give the public a chance; you can pay people, by giving them expensive food and drinks for nothing, to look on while you act, or while you sing; you can 'bribe' a reluctant world to your feet just as you 'bribe' a naughty child to be good, for a moment. And in spite of all this—this gross fact about life—about marriage for a woman—Stella felt willing to 'give up' Major Kames to Maud, and to take instead this penniless, brilliant young man. It would mean death to the career she desired, but it would mean love! And after all love is—something! So indeed she argued!

As to Maud, she listened, but all the time her whole mind was intent, watching Broughton with downcast eyes that nothing escaped—not a glance, not the intonation of a word. Why did Stella allow this man to love her?—for it was plain to Maud that her sister was not in love with him, but was trying to think she was! Probably Stella felt that she too must marry somebody! So she meant to marry Broughton, only—and this was Maud's chief point—Stella was preventing some other woman from loving him, deeply, passionately, for his own sake. Strangely enough, this thought made

Maud's pulses leap with indignation. So George Broughton was to be sacrificed !

What about Major Kames being sacrificed on the same altar ?

Ah, there was all the world of difference. The two men could not be compared. To compare Major Kames with Broughton was like comparing a modern Paris restaurant, ornamented with rococo plaster mouldings, with a Greek temple of the age of Pericles. To sacrifice Broughton was a shocking outrage, to sacrifice Major Kames was—well—a pity for the person who was compelled to do it. Maud felt profound—profound pity for Major Kames' wife.

The clock had struck half-past ten and the long hand had slowly dragged itself to the figure eight, when the front-door bell was heard to ring sharply.

Major Kames ! The note she had given to the maid would stop him from coming upstairs ! No, it had not stopped him, for there he was, actually coming upstairs ! How horrible ! No, it was not Major Kames—it was a woman's steps—alone.

Maud had clutched hold of both arms of her chair ; the flush had vanished from her face and left her absolutely pale. She felt as if some one standing behind her had gently but firmly pressed her head down to receive some dreaded weight. She heard the door open ; the odour of flowers came to her nostrils ; the whole room was filled by the scent of flowers.

' For you, Miss,' said the maid at her elbow, and she laid a massive bouquet of lilies of the valley and carnations upon her knees. The maid also held out a letter.

' For you, Miss,' she repeated.

Maud raised her head and took the letter. She half rose from her chair, and the flowers dropped to the ground.

In a moment Broughton was gathering them up.

' They are magnificent ! Do you find the scent a bit strong ? ' he asked quietly.

Ursula's knitting had dropped to her lap, and she was sitting upright looking at Maud. Stella was leaning forward in her chair staring.

Neither of her sisters asked : ' Who are the flowers from ? ' They both knew. How could he have got flowers at this hour when the shops are closed ? for her letter only reached him at nine. That was only part of the sinister unreality of the moment. The whole incident was like a nightmare from which she was unable to rouse herself. Broughton was passing Maud, in order to place the flowers

on a table, and as he did so he swiftly and adroitly touched her hand with his, and whispered :

‘Don’t tear up your letter !’

Maud looked down at her hands. She was tearing up the letter. The touch of his hand on hers had brought her to her senses. It was the touch of a man who sympathises, nothing more. It was Stella whom this man loved. She, Maud, was loved by Major Kames.

Maud straightened herself, and drew a long breath, and gravely tore open the envelope and unfolded the sheet.

It contained one word—‘Thanks’—in Major Kames’s large handwriting.

Maud looked round the room. Broughton was putting the flowers into an empty bowl. Ursula was fumbling with her knitting and leaning over it. Stella’s face was flushed and averted.

‘They are from Major Kames,’ said Maud, and she walked to where Broughton was standing.

‘I suppose I must have them put into water,’ she added. She gathered them up in her hands, and went to the door. Broughton opened it for her, and she passed through without looking at him again, bearing her burden.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN once in her room she closed the door softly.

Only a genius could have said ‘Thanks’ and yet—

She threw the flowers upon her bed. Then with a guilty, restless movement, she filled a glass on the mantelpiece and, taking up the flowers again, put them in. Then she opened her door and stepped outside and listened, the flowers in her hand. She could hear voices louder and louder, the sitting-room door was opening, he was saying ‘Good-night.’ She closed her door again, and turned the key and put down the flowers. She stood holding her breath and waiting ; she had closed her door lest she should hear him saying anything to Stella outside. She closed her ears for some seconds—it seemed a long time—and when she opened them she heard him come along the passage, pass her door, and go downstairs ; then came a moment’s quiet, and the hall door was pulled open and shut again. He had gone. Why had she met George Broughton to-day ? He had made her hate Major Kames.

Maud unlocked her door again and looked out. The sitting-room

door was shut and no sounds came from it. She swiftly seized the vase of flowers and put it on a little table outside the sitting-room door. Then she returned to her room and locked the door for the second time. She could not go and say 'Good-night' to her sisters. She hadn't the nerve. It would be bad enough to say 'Good-morning' at breakfast and meet their eyes, now that they knew, though it would have been infinitely worse to have had to tell them. At least, that was over.

She resolutely began to undress. In a few minutes she heard Stella come out of the sitting-room singing in a sprightly way. She suddenly changed her singing into a whistle as she ran upstairs to her room. Maud thought she heard Ursula follow, and then all was quiet.

Maud had not been in bed a quarter of an hour, when there came a slight knock on her door; it was just loud enough to be heard if one was awake. Maud lay motionless and made no response. She tried to imagine that the sound was an illusion. The knock was repeated a second time, and Maud, not able to call it an illusion any more, began to harden her heart against the sound. Why did Ursula want to disturb her now that the pulses in her head were throbbing like some remorseless machinery? Why did Ursula insist on coming to her room?—why should she intrude just now—just now?

Maud listened for the knock to come a third time, but it did not come; she could hear only a faint rustle as of some one going away, and then there came absolute silence.

For a few moments Maud went on justifying herself vehemently for not letting her sister in. Why should she have to endure any reproaches, by word or look, about this crisis in her life? If her engagement was a wrong one, it was she who would suffer, and no one else. Life had conspired against her; she was the victim of tragedy; whereas all that was worth having, all that made for real happiness, had been thrown at Stella's feet, for her to play with. And yet Ursula actually wanted to come to talk about it all! It was rather hard! Then, while she still justified herself and pitied herself, there came sweeping over her the remembrance of all that Ursula had been to her, all that she had done for her, the years of unselfish ministrations; and yet this unique sister and friend had been shut out from all knowledge of an event that was to come and separate them for ever. This friend had been repulsed when she—humbly enough—knocked at the door.

Bitter tears came to Maud's eyes and she wept on her pillow. Her father had been nothing to her—emotionally. He had been a presence, a voice speaking authoritatively, as she thought, discussing affairs, books, religion, philosophy, science, with the airy scepticism of a dilettante, colouring her youthful views of the world of thought. It was Ursula who had shared all her childish joys and sorrows, and who had watched over her with a maternal love. And dear Ursula, poor Ursula, was she lying awake, grieved to the heart ?

Maud pushed out her arm in the darkness and put on the light. She threw on her dressing-gown and put on her slippers. The air was very cold. Cautiously she unlocked her door and opened it. It was dark in passage and stairs, and the faint perfume of those flowers met her on the warm air of the closed house.

She left her door open and by its light crept upstairs. One of the stairs creaked as she went up. At the top it was almost perfectly dark ; she felt her way to Ursula's door. Ursula had the front room. It had not been her wish, but propriety had compelled the two younger sisters to thrust it upon her. Under Ursula's door was a faint streak of light. Maud paused. She did not knock, because Ursula had knocked on her door in vain ; she turned round the handle noiselessly and opened the door and closed it behind her. Ursula was sitting up in bed. She was reading.

Maud could see that she had been crying, the eyes behind the eyeglasses were reddened, and the mouth was relaxed. She exclaimed in a whisper :

‘ Maud ! Dear Maud ! ’

Maud came towards the bed.

‘ I ought to have told you,’ she said—‘ oh, Ursula, I ought to have told you. Forgive me, forgive me, dear. God bless you—I can't wait, but I must say Good-night, darling Ursula.’

Maud bent down swiftly and kissed her sister's brow and then fled—fled, closing the door behind her rapidly and securely, and hurrying down the stairs, by the aid of the thin railing, back to her own bedroom. And with her went the memory of Ursula's face—pale, tear-stained, full of love in which there was no room for thought of self, no room for forgiveness, for no anger had tarnished that heart of gold. Ursula's face meant profound anxiety for her darling's happiness and—perhaps—a sense of great loneliness.

(To be continued.)

A TRUE DREAM.¹

(Dreamed at Sidmouth, 1833.)

[The following poem by Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, afterwards the wife of Robert Browning, was purchased by Mr. T. J. Wise at the recent sale of Browning MSS.—EDITOR.]

I HAD not an evil end in view,
Tho' I trod the evil way;
And why I practised the magic art,
My dream it did not say.

I unsealed the vial mystical,
I outpoured the liquid thing,
And while the smoke came wreathing out,
I stood unshuddering.

The smoke came wreathing, wreathing out,
All mute, and dark, and slow,
Till its cloud was stained with a fleshly hue,
And a fleshly form 'gan show.

Then paused the smoke—the fleshly form
Looked steadfast in mine ee,
His beard was black as a thundercloud,
But I trembled not to see.

I unsealed the vial mystical,
I outpoured the liquid thing,
And while the smoke came wreathing out,
I stood unshuddering.

The smoke came wreathing, wreathing out,
All mute, and dark, and slow,
Till its cloud was stained with a fleshly hue,
And a fleshly form 'gan show.

Then paused the smoke—but the mortal form
A garment swart did veil,
I looked on it with fixed heart,
Yea—not a pulse did fail!

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I unsealed the vial mystical,
I outpoured the liquid thing,
And while the smoke came wreathing out,
I stood unshuddering.

The smoke came wreathing, wreathing out,
And now it was faster and lighter,
And it bore on its folds the rainbow's hues,
Heaven could not show them brighter.

Then paused the smoke, the rainbow's hues
Did a childish face express—
The rose in the cheek, the blue in the eyne,
The yellow in the tress.

The fair young child shook back her hair,
And round me her arms did wreath,
Her lips were hard and cold as stone,
They sucked away my breath.

I cast her off as she clung to me,
With hate and shuddering ;
I brake the vials, and foresware
The cursed, cursed thing.

Anon outspake a brother of mine—
' Upon the pavement, see,
Besprent with noisome poison slime,
Those twining serpents three.'

Anon outspake my wildered heart
As I saw the serpent train—
' I have called up three existences
I cannot quench again.

' Alas ! with unholy company,
My lifetime they will scathe ;
They will hiss in the storm, and on sunny days
Will gleam and thwart my path.'

Outspake that pitying brother of mine—
‘ Now nay, my sister, nay,
I will pour on them oil of vitriol,
And burn their lives away.’

‘ Now nay, my brother, torture not,
Now hold thine hand, and spare.’
He poured on them oil of vitriol,
And did not heed my prayer.

I saw the drops of torture fall ;
I heard the shriekings rise,
While the serpents writhed in agony
Beneath my dreaming eyes.

And while they shrieked, and while they writhed,
And inward and outward wound,
They waxed larger, and their wail
Assumed a human sound.

And glared their eyes, and their slimy scales
Were roundly and redly bright,
Most like the lidless sun, what time
Thro’ the mist he meets your sight.

And larger and larger they waxed still,
And longer still and longer ;
And they shrieked in their pain, ‘ Come, come to us,
We are stronger, we are stronger.’

Upon the ground I laid mine head,
And heard the wailing sound ;
I did not wail, I did not writhe—
I laid me on the ground.

And larger and larger they waxed still
And longer still and longer ;
And they shrieked in their pangs, ‘ Come, come to us,
We are stronger, we are stronger.’

Then up I raised my burning brow,
 My quiv'ring arms on high;
 I spake in prayer, and I named aloud
 The name of sanctity.

And as in my anguish I prayed and named
 Aloud the holy name,
 The impious mocking serpent voice
 Did echo back the same.

And larger and larger they waxed still,
 And longer still and longer;
 And they shrieked in their pangs, 'Come, come to us,
 We are stronger, we are stronger.'

Then out from among them arose a form
 In shroud of death indued—
 I fled from him with wings of wind,
 With whirlwinds he pursued.

* * * * *

I stood by a chamber door, and thought
 Within its gloom to hide;
 I locked the door, and the while forgot
 That I stood on the outer side.

And the knell of mine heart was wildly tolled
 While I grasped still the key;
 For I felt beside me the icy breath,
 And knew that *that* was *he*.

I heard these words, 'Whoe'er doth *taste*,
 Will *drink* the magic bowl;
 So her body may do my mission here
 Companioned by her soul.'

Mine hand was cold as the key it held,
 Mine heart had an iron weight;
 I saw a gleam, I heard a sound—
 The clock was striking eight.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BARRETT.

THE BEAUTY OF AGE.¹

BY ARTHUR C. BENSON.

I.

THERE is a well-known passage in a letter of Ruskin's, in which he draws a very careful and suggestive distinction between two kinds of beauty—the beauty of Association and the beauty of Expression.

The point, simply stated, is this—that an old and beautiful thing has two quite distinct kinds of beauty, though it is not always easy to say where one begins and the other ends. It has original design and conception, which Ruskin rightly says ought to be called Expression, and which is, technically speaking, the classical quality in beauty ; it has also the beauty of Association, a varied and slowly acquired thing, which gradually draws into itself all sorts of interests and delights, deposited, as Pater says, cell upon cell ; and this beauty of Association is definitely a romantic beauty, not a question of form and proportion, but a power of evolving a sort of spiritual music, in which themes and *motifs* outline themselves for an instant and disappear again.

Ruskin says quite truly that the romantic element of Association is twenty times more powerful—that is, in the majority of minds—than the beauty of Expression ; the latter kind of beauty is a thing in itself, as distinct as Higher Mathematics ; an absolute quality, depending upon some hidden psychological law, which tells even the untrained mind what is in due proportion and what is not—while the beauty of Association is a subjective thing, contributed to a great degree by the spirit of the individual man who perceives it. The more highly stored that the mind behind the eye is, the more rich its memories, the more deftly and swiftly that it summons up and applies its garnered impressions, the more that it knows and feels, the more fertile and accessible its sympathies are, by so much the more appealing does the romantic force of Association become. Dean Stanley, who in later life parted with the sense of taste and smell, found music a more or less distracting noise, and lost his pleasure in natural scenery—it's a somewhat desolating picture—would still, his biographer says, go twenty miles to see a few grey

¹ An address delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, on June 19, 1914, at Burlington House.

stones in a field, which had once formed part of an historical building, because they could evoke by a species of symbol a memory of great persons and lofty actions. That is a good instance of what I mean, of Association limited to one channel but running vehemently there.

The sort of picture that rises in my mind to illustrate the force of Association is this. Many years ago, on a clear morning of sun and wind, a companion of mine and myself, leaving the Appian Way, waded through the high grass of the Campagna, where the nesting larks rose at our feet upon the wing, to visit an ancient brickwork tomb, a stone's cast from the road. I can see it now, as when we stood before it. It had been a square pile of strict design, and some trace of column and pediment emerged in the ruinous surfaces, just touching the sense of underlying form ; but it was so old and shapeless that it looked almost as if it had melted and guttered like a candle in the fierce sun. The snapdragon and the red valerian sprouted on the ledges, and the top was tufted with self-wafted grass. It had neither name nor record ; the memorial slabs had long been plucked from the walls to repose in some museum, and of what sincere grief or patrician pride it was the relic was alike unknown. But it roused a host of haunting thoughts, the secrets of death and life, the sad vicissitude of things, as it stood there against the blue of the sky, with the carolling larks overhead, and the dim hills faintly seen over the endless turf of the rolling plain.

II.

I have lately been spending a fortnight in the Cotswold country, which I first discovered by accident on a bicycle tour thirty years ago. My first find was Burford, that astonishing little town, with its Gothic, Tudor, Jacobean, Renaissance, and Classical houses, all more or less local products, I suppose, but distinguished at every date by an infallible touch of style, and all built out of that creamy orange oolite which cuts so easily and so sharply, and weathers so finely and with such diversity of colour. The interest of that little town is that it shows a strong tendency at every date to try experiments. It is dominated by no traditions. When I first saw it, the great manor-house behind the pillared gates was ruinous, and there was an almost riotously Cinque-Cento chapel attached to the house, out of the rose-window of which the ivy sprawled, disjointing the stones. I wrote an article about Burford—the first article of mine which

ever appeared in a London magazine—and got into sad trouble with an older friend who had kept and guarded the secret of Burford for years. At a later date I found out Broadway and Chipping Campden—the latter being, I believe, the most interesting and beautiful little town in England ; I saw Stanway, with its Inigo Jones gatehouse, and many of those fine secluded manor-houses, among bare, stone-built hamlets, in the low, cold valleys, with their spare, faintly tinted turf slopes, and the clear cressy streams sparkling by low bridges and weathered garden-terraces.

But it is humiliating, in a sense, to think that I was only exemplifying a tendency, and that others were discovering the Cotswolds too. In those days there was just a hint, in a little village mansion or a mullioned cottage gracefully adapted, that artistic people were setting up house there quietly, in panelled, stone-floored rooms, and liking the touches of grace and style that met the eye at every turn.

But now the Cotswolds are discovered, as they say, with a vengeance. There is a secluded combe, which I found some fifteen years ago, on a warm, soft, spring morning ; up the steep road I went, into the green folds of the little valley, and the high hanging woods winding steeply into the hill. There was a church, with a sombre manor-house close by, a mere homestead evidently, with all the pleasant litter of byre and poultry-yard close about the house, which held up its gables and chimneys over a plum-orchard. Close beside this was an old fifteenth-century rectory, half buried in laurels. It looked as if time had gone to sleep there ; and the spring scents in the air, the songs of birds breaking from the thickets, the unselfconscious homely life of the place, as we wound up higher and higher, till we looked down on the grey roofs and chimney-tops far below, fixed it in my mind as a type of the perfectly beautiful places of the earth, with its own dumb appropriate life proceeding unregarded and undisturbed. How often have I in sleepless hours moved in thought up the road among the orchards, and on into the folds of the hill !

But what did I find there a month or two ago ? A rich man, of exuberant taste no doubt, has discovered it too ; through the plum-orchard a neat road winds, embanked with shrubs. The litter of the farm is cleared away, and a new wing of excellent design has thrown the old front out of proportion, while the whole hillside about the house is terraced into gardens and planted with yew-hedges. The hamlet behind is one almighty mess. There

is an excellent new circular well-house, and some sympathetically designed stables ; but there are also kennels and motor-houses, and great barns of corrugated iron. Numbers of old cherry-trees have been cleared away ; and what is worse than all, an ineffable shabbiness, a sense of disgrace, seems to have fallen upon the old cottages, which still lurk among the ragged and mud-stained slopes.

Now I do not want to be sentimental over this ! I do not object to people desiring to live in beautiful places ; and if I were rich enough, it is just what I should like to have done, though I hope I would have treated the hamlet more tenderly. Moreover, I have no kind of doubt that in a hundred years the place will be fully as beautiful again. But it seems to me curious that if one is attracted to such a spot by its unique charm of seclusion and homeliness, one should not wish just to slip unobserved into the life of the place, and try to fall in with the secret of its peace. No doubt when the old manor and rectory and church were first built, an inroad must have been made into a rare kind of sylvan tranquillity ; and one cannot but feel, too, that the contrivers of those fine little buildings must have had a strong sense of something beautiful at which they were aiming ; but I also feel that it was a simpler sort of instinct then—and that art just came in to decorate life ; but for a rich manufacturer to plant himself there seems to me an exotic sort of luxury ; and though I am sure that an instinct for beauty entered into his choice, yet the way in which the place has been treated makes me fear that the charm of the whole has not been even dimly perceived and grasped. Indeed, it seems to me as if some sad domestic diplomacy must have dictated the design. A wife, perhaps, taking a fancy to a spot, and a husband, grumbling, but ready to compromise, as long as he was allowed his glass-topped motor-wash and his corrugated-iron barns. It makes one understand, at all events, the frame of mind of William Morris, when he said that this particular kind of selfconscious epicureanism, which trades under the sacred name of art, must be utterly swept away before any authentic art can begin. The difference lies to a great extent, I think, in this : That the first builders settled there because they meant to live there, while the later owner treats it as a comfortable house for the summer, as long as it is filled with pleasant guests, and because it is what he would call within reach, which only means that it is easy to get away from. It is not in fact a home, but a house of recreation ; and that is what strikes one about the whole—that the last thing

which it means to the owner is striking silent root, and growing to love, half-unconsciously and not at all artistically, the curve of the upland over which in winter the sun hardly looks, the steep sloping of the high wood, the clustering orchards—all the things which seen habitually at all hours and in all moods become so unutterably and inexpressibly dear as the background of life.

But it rather means a few months of chatter and entertainment, of picnics and motor-rides, a spot which one does not so much love, as feel proud that one's friends admire it, and envy one's taste and wealth.

It is this sticking of art into life, as one would stick a flower into a buttonhole, which is so truly dreary. Art is not worth anything at all if used so : it must mingle with life, not be smeared over the gaps of it ; and though I am not so faint-hearted or so foolish as to think that modern taste means decadence and effeminacy, yet I think it means a total misunderstanding of what art is—a belief that one can learn it and acquire it and purchase it, when it is in reality a great and silent thing, which must permeate the whole of life, and not be fitfully played with for ease and distraction.

III.

But the saddest thing about these beautiful Cotswold villages is the condition of the churches. It is almost impossible to find an unrestored church ; and it is also nearly impossible to find a church which has not been restored out of all interest and beauty. It is hardly, perhaps, fair to say that ; for the fine Cotswold stone is fortunately not a stone which moulders or decays. It gets harder from exposure, puts on its rich colour, and the carving is often as sharp and clear as when it was first made. Thus the exteriors have suffered comparatively little ; but the interiors have been scraped, cleansed, furbished up, renovated—pews, woodwork, galleries, have vanished in favour of neat deal Gothic seats ; mean and commonplace reredoses have been inserted ; many monuments have been removed, and frightful glass has been inserted. I remember, ten years ago, in one of the finest of the Cotswold churches, falling in with the vicar, an excellent man, abounding in energy and ecclesiastical bonhomie, who took me round his church with irrepressible pride. In the tower were piled up the pieces of a grand late seventeenth-century reredos. A broken pediment, columns, great oak panels, gilded urns, the

ineffable Name in a glory. I do not suppose it could have been put up for less than a thousand pounds. I asked what it was. 'The old reredos,' he said cheerfully, 'a hideous thing! The moment I set foot in the church, when I was appointed, I said to myself, "Well *you* have got to go!" Of course the people didn't like it—they said they were fond of it—but I used a little diplomacy, and went to work gradually; and now we have got something a little more in accordance with Christian feeling and Church tradition—and I am just waiting to sell it all to a dealer.'

I looked at the East end. There was a poor flat alabaster reredos, with three compartments crowded with tasteless figures, and little blobs of bright-coloured crystals inserted, looking like jellies at a garden-party. The connection of such an object with art was easy enough to define, because it had none. The connection of it with Christianity was still more obscure. It was just a specimen of the hybrid taste of vapid designers, sentimental, pietistic. Instead of arousing emotion and interest, it left one drearily wondering out of what tame and smug mood it could have originated: it was a mere combination of forms imperfectly recollected, and of materials wholly misunderstood.

The worst part of it all is that this sort of restoration has its roots in a perfectly virtuous and active desire to make the church an efficient institution, and to render it as spick-and-span and clean, as comfortable and bright, as a well-ordered middle-class parlour. Brightness is a word in whose name the worst artistic crimes have been committed. All solemnity and venerable decay and remoteness have to be obliterated in favour of efficiency and smartness. In church after church it is the same; the object being, if possible, to obscure and remove every portion of the interior surface upon which the eyes of the generations have rested. I did indeed enter one church where the hamlet was too poor and the vicar too old to collect money; and there was every quality present that one would desire. A real tradition, not a fatuous reaction, every century being really represented by an infinite variety of accretion; and in one place, best of all, I found a practically disused church, a noble cruciform pile, too far from the village for practical purposes, with all its old surfaces and weather stains, its woodwork leaning at many pleasant angles, its flooring patched and uneven, a real and vital growth from end to end.

But it is heartrending to think of all the exquisite beauty which has been sacrificed in the last fifty years by men of

vigour and determination, who have every virtue but that of connoisseurship !

Of course it may be said that the mediæval builders were ruthless demolishers. They undoubtedly did prefer a clean new stone building to an old and mouldering one. There are plenty of churches, like Ely and Lincoln, where what must have been splendid Norman work was swept away for Decorated or Perpendicular constructions. But then the old builders had an idea ; they were going forwards ; their art was in process of developing with a light-hearted eagerness. What is so deplorable about modern restoration is that it is all a submissive harking back to an arbitrary period of Church art. It is not a departure, it is a tame virtuosity, desiring, if possible, to reconstruct a vanished atmosphere, without any real knowledge of what that atmosphere actually was. The essence of the old building and decoration was to have a few fine dignified things on which the eye might rest with unsated pleasure, for ever discovering new beauties. But the new theory is to cover up everything with tawdry and flashy decoration, which gives perhaps a scenic sort of pleasure at first sight, and which breeds an ever-increasing disgust at the continued contemplation of its shallow trickeries.

And then what is still more detestable is the callous neglect of all the later developments, the assumption that classical forms are essentially Pagan, the horrible narrow-mindedness which regards the Almighty as being in favour of fourteenth-century effects, and helplessly unable to guide or affect the taste of seventeenth-century decorators. I believe myself that this sort of purism is a real sign of vital decadence, because it means a deep-seated absence of historical and artistic sympathy. The late Mr. Kempe, at whose house I was a frequent guest, used to twit me by saying that my taste was purely Georgian ; but for all that I believe that a pleasure in variety shows a healthier appetite for what is beautiful and interesting than a hypochondriacal distaste for all but a prim and cautious diet.

I believe with all my heart in a beauty of strict form ; and my own natural taste is for great spaces, simple outlines, large ashlar, and an economical concentration of decoration upon choir and altar. But I believe also in the immense interest and charm of development and accretion—what Ruskin calls Association. I like to see and to preserve the best that people could do, whether it is a gaudy Jacobean tomb crowded with obelisks and emblems, and

a stiff-ruffed figure in veined alabaster, or even a wigged divine clasping a marble book, among lachrymose cherubs and cinerary urns. Those who ordered and those who designed such things thought them beautiful ; and nothing which has ever engaged the affections and devotions of human hearts can ever wholly lose its charm.

IV.

Let me try then for a few minutes to disentangle some of the different streams which meet in the river of Association, and which form what I have called the Beauty of Age ; and in the first place I would say that when one looks at an old building—and let me take as a simple instance one of the houses of which I have been speaking—a house, let me say, such as you may see in any of these Cotswold villages, a house not large enough perhaps to be quite a manor-house, and yet far removed from a cottage. Such houses have a character and even a personality of their own. There is one that I will briefly describe, in a hamlet called Snow's Hill, near Broadway. The hamlet is built high up near the lip of the downs, and the ground falls very rapidly indeed below the high road. The house in question is a great substantial place ; it has a solid wall fencing its garden from the road, and the garden itself is a small, terraced triangle, below the road, the front of the house being at right-angles to the road, and looking down the garden. You enter the garden by an iron gate in a little archway, with a pleasant and simple Jacobean entablature above it. Looking through, the garden is divided into two by a low wall, in the centre of which are two solid gate-posts, with balls on the top ; so that as you look through the arched gate, you see first of all a little bit of wild garden, with big sprawling box-trees and laurels, and through the further gate on to a lawn, with a few bushes of red-flowering currant and guelder-rose and corchorus, and a tiny border where daffodils blow early in the sheltered sunny corner. The front of the house is a solid piece of Jacobean work, with square, cross-mullioned windows ; while the side on the road is that of a still earlier house, with little mullioned windows and high gables. Behind the house are big barns and stone outbuildings ; while if you go round and look at the whole from a little distance, you see that the side of the house away from the road is of a great height, because the ground falls so rapidly, and is supported with large and solid buttresses, the feet of which go down into an orchard ;

so that this side of the house rises steeply above the tops of the apple-trees and plum-trees, while the lower rooms are used as fruit-garners and hay-stores. There are quarries close by, and labour was probably cheap ; and I expect the house was a long time in building, because of the various styles employed. Yet in any case it is difficult to account for it, just as it is difficult to account for the immense houses which one meets with in Swiss or Italian villages, which seem of a *grandeur* wholly out of proportion to anyone who can ever have lived in so lonely and poor a spot.

Now let us come back to my idea of personality. If one wanders about among these Cotswold villages, one sees plenty of pretty children, with the charm of opening life all about them ; and one sees, too, handsome boys and young men and graceful girls, who are silent enough and uncommunicative, perhaps even to each other, but yet whose faces and movements speak of the beauty which is interwoven with the world more eloquently than their tongues could discourse of it ; and then one sees men and women, who look sturdy and sensible enough, but as if the toil of life left them little enough else to think about ; and one sees, too, faces which seem to have gone to pieces under the stress of life and appetite —but then also, sitting at garden-ends, or coming with a friendly welcome to the doors of tiny parlours, or just creeping about slowly in the sun, one sees old men and women, into whose faces and forms some curious beauty of work and love and experience and patience seems to have passed. A silvery-haired old woman, whom I still gratefully remember, seeing me unfold a map as if doubtful of the way, came briskly down her little garden, under the nailed-up pear-tree that made the house-front gay and sweet with fresh white blossom, and between the little plots of wall-flowers, to ask if she could direct us. Her soft voice and her clear grey eyes, her lined and wholesome face with its motherly smile, gave one that sudden sense of wistful human relations which underlies all that we say and do ; and an hour later I saw an old man, in a sort of rough blue cloak, with a piping voice, whose expressive face, with its big nose and firm lips, might have gone straight into a fifteenth-century stained-glass window as an apostle or a prophet.

That is the human beauty of age ; not a beauty of form or of desire ; but a beauty which comes of having lived and worked and loved, rooted in a tiny hamlet on the skirts of a wooded hill, with perhaps a touch of suffering and of loss to refine it. So that

one feels—and I do not think fancifully—that something has been gained and achieved, which cannot be done otherwise than by living ; and that some of the beauty of those hillsides clothed with orchards, with copse-clad hollow and wooded combe, of long summer days and pale winter dawns, of seedtime and harvest, of frosty sunset and falling rain at daybreak, has left its mark there, and none the less certainly, if unconsciously and dumbly perceived ; faces that seem to say, in William Morris' beautiful lines :

' I am old, and have seen
Many things that have been ; . . .
And for worst and best
Right good is rest.'

Well, something of all that seems to have passed into the old house as well. It has sheltered many lives ; it has seen happy and quiet things ; and it has also seen ugly, cruel, wicked, and tragic things. It is not sentimental to think thus, if one faces the fact that the house has seen much that had better never have happened, and out of which no good can spring ; the sentimental view is to think that life has always been sweet and halcyon there, with children's voices and young lovers wooing, and old folks talking slowly at the close of the day. Life is not in the least like that, and is not meant to be ; and it is the very opposite of sentiment to know that the old house has its coarse and evil secrets, which have somehow all floated together down the stream of time, and have made it what it is, wonderful and strange, with a shadow of pain and fear, which we must try to lessen somehow by patience and kindness.

The old house bears witness to all that ! There was the builder of it, who here at least must have exulted in his design, to set the great house hanging like a swallow's nest on the hill-cornice, and yet to have made it so sturdy and stately. Then he made the soft orange stone serve his turn, which comes so easily away, all ready laminated and needing only honest shaping, from the quarry behind the village, with its grassy fir-tufted mounds. Precarious though the site is, the house has no sign of crack or sideslip ; it was built to endure. He did not think much of ornament. There is just a hint of it, no more, in the shallow door-pediment, the plain corbel-work of the cornice, and the little outlined oval windows in the gables, with their plain entablatures. It is not a house for entertainment. It is a house for family life and safe storage and for goods safely bestowed ; but above and beyond the common use is the clear

sense of making something beautiful and stately ; a house to be proud of, and to remember the easy days of childhood spent there, the coming of the spring, haymaking, and harvest, and the long winter evenings, all to be half-joyfully, half-sadly recalled by son or daughter of the house, when they have drifted far away, and have cares and homes of their own.

That is the emotional appeal of the old house ; it is unreal in a sense, a false pathos, because in a world where there is much conscious pain we have no need to multiply it, and to credit passive and insensible things with our own tender susceptibilities. We ought not to seek to augment our sensitiveness. An old and fierce lady of my acquaintance fixed her residence in France, but stubbornly refused to learn a single word of the language, and addressed the peasants of the place in loud, slow, majestic English. When she was asked if she did not wish to speak to the natives in a tongue which they could understand, she replied : ' Certainly not—it only encourages them ! ' We must adopt that attitude to our sensibilities !

But on the other hand, how natural such susceptibility is ! Anyone who has ever broken up a home and parted with familiar furniture must surely have had the feeling that the old chairs and tables are being unjustly used, and that they will not really ever feel happy with their new owners ; and the love of a home is a complex thing, because a house has all the charm of a picture or a book, in that it is an expression of a human personality, a symbol of human desires and designs ; and then it acquires too the secondary charm of having been the scene and witness of human adventures and events, so that the beam of the roof and the stone of the wall have become inseparably connected with human emotions and hopes and fears, and have a sanctity of which they cannot be divested, which even the prosaic Romans felt and rendered in the untranslatable phrase, *admonitus locorum*—the spirit and influence of a place—the way in which a scene, which is associated with the horror of a calamity, or which has been the haunt of genius, can tacitly warn a human heart to forbear, to beware, to make a choice, or to follow a high example. That is the spiritual side of what I have called the Beauty of Age—its real and potent effect upon the emotions of men.

And then too, in a less ethical and a more artistic region, there is the beauty which falls upon a building from the accommodation of all its mutual parts, through the touch of rain and sun, the pressure

of wind, the strains and stresses of the earth, the movements of the soil, the slow passage of hidden streams, the thrust of burrowing tree-roots, the settling-down and distributing of the weights of wall and roof. When a building is first set up, it has a mathematical rigidity and precision, as of a box of stone half-imbedded in a field. Then the slow process begins : here a softer passage of soil causes a settlement, a corner begins to shift away, and the rest of the house inclines a little to retain the fabric in its place ; the roof-timber warps and bends, and the tiles dip and waver in outline. All this is a pure gain, because the beauty of the underlying form is there, under the tiny deviations which relieve the eye from a too mathematical precision. The house leans and gathers itself together, and at last comes to look, not as if it were set upon the soil, but had grown up out of it, like a rock or a tree. It is no longer an intruded thing, but a part of the scene. Meanwhile every surface is feeling the influence of the chemistry of the air ; the sharp edges are softened, the lichen spreads its delicate patches, the sun bleaches the southern surfaces, the moss creeps along the sheltered ledge ; the whole fades and glows into a soft harmony of colour and outline. I was looking the other day at what I believe to be one of the most beautiful of churches, the half-ruined Priory of Little Malvern, in its wooded background, with its shallow slender-shafted panelling ; and I saw it to be a mass of delicately blended colour, purple and green and ruddy brown, an effect that can be produced by no calculation or nicety of art ; and yet that particular effect which no wealth can purchase and no skill can reproduce, is the very quality which the strong-minded restorer so ruthlessly casts away, not understanding that a rebuilt, repainted, furbished tower has nothing whatever of interest about it except the interest of a copy, an archaeological study. And this is the real horror of restoration, that this slow treasure of accrued beauty and charm is so dully sacrificed, and the gentle influence of centuries flung petulantly and ignorantly away, as the old magical lamp in the story of Aladdin, with all its powers and secrets, was heedlessly exchanged for what is shamefully called an up-to-date affair—new lamps for old !

V.

So my first and last plea is that we should dare to let things alone, even if we do not understand them or think them beautiful, for the sake of the tender care which set them in their place, just so and not otherwise, and in the name of memory and reverence and

love. For taste is a very changeable and inconstant thing, but reverence is eternal. The old house, the old church, ought to mean something to us, and we must not lightly change and deface them. Of course, we must not let such emotions hamper our lives, and still less unfit us for harder and baser conditions. We ought not to grow more and more fastidious by experience ; and if we find ourselves growing more and more disgusted and impatient, if we cannot have things to our mind, then we are setting art before life, and not simply using it to enrich and strengthen life. If we are dealing with old and venerable things, we ought to do as little as we can to them ; mending and repairing, but not what is called restoring. For a restored church is not a new church and it is not an old church —it is a new church without its originality and an old church without its dignity. ‘God has given you one face,’ as Shakespeare says, ‘and you make to yourself another.’

And if additions must be made for use and life, let them be frank additions, and not an attempt to fake what is old. I frankly feel that the weakest part of modern art is its attempt to fake antiquity ; and that is a melodramatic sort of art, an attempt to produce illusion —a mere piece of stagecraft, an attempt to import historical colour which is not fairly there.

The Beauty of Age is very easily marred, and it cannot be imitated ; and I am sure that, whatever art is, it must be sincere. It is the emotion which art can give which makes it worth while ; but it must be a real emotion, and not a bit of clever self-deception. A love of story-telling and character-moulding is typical of the decline of real emotion. As Milton said of the staircase of heaven,

‘ Each stair mysteriously was meant.’

There is a mystery and a meaning in it all. We do not know exactly what it represents, but we must do our best to interpret its meaning ; and thus we must be serious about art, if we are to get any help from it ; but never solemn. It is being solemn about art when we try to make it produce fictitious effects, just for the luxury of the emotion ; but it shows a lack of all seriousness about it, if we can misuse and deface a beautiful thing, and destroy the rich beauty which only time and use and reverence can create.

FROM A ROMAN PALACE.

BY THE MARCHESA PERUZZI DE' MEDICI.

I.

My mother was always at home on Friday afternoons and Sunday evenings from November until the time when she left Rome for the summer. On Fridays, she received in what we used to call 'the end room,' as it was the last of the suite of drawing-rooms, and one was obliged to pass through ball-room, green-room, red music-room, and billiard-room to get to it. The walls were frescoed with figures in niches, mezzotint and white, and on the ceiling floated golden Barberini bees. The four windows opened upon fine characteristic views of Rome. Two looked upon the Piazza del Tritone with its shady trees, the Capucine Convent, and the beautiful Ludovisi Gardens with their dense avenues of dark ilexes. The other two faced St. Peter's, and were flooded with sunshine. As the windows were rather high up, high chairs were placed in their embrasures, and here one could sit and watch the sun sinking behind the dome, and admire the after-glow that filled the room with its reflections after the sun itself had gone down. These chairs were in great demand, and it became an institution for foreigners in Rome to come to see the sunset from them, watching the great orb going slowly down behind the dome, whilst the palms of the Corsini Gardens were silhouetted against the horizon. At times a white mist would rise in the middle distance from which emerged alone the brown belfry of St. Andrea dei Frati. A water-colour sketch by George Howard (Lord Carlisle), taken from one of these windows, gives one the finest and most poetical impression of this effect. Nor were these visits confined to Fridays any more than the sunsets were! On coming home from our drive we often found friends seated there after their day's sight-seeing, quietly enjoying the restful influence of the scene, alone disturbed by the cawing of the rooks as they returned to their homes amongst the Ludovisi ilexes, following the tender light in the evening sky after the glory of day had subsided above Monte Mario.

My mother was a great favourite with the Romans, and her house—being a foreign one—was, so to speak, neutral ground;

all parties in politics could meet there, Liberals and Clericals alike, or, as they called themselves, Blacks and Whites ; and seemingly they found it a relief to be able to come where they could meet many old friends, and could see each other and talk quite freely without being criticised by their party. The Diplomatic Corps came *au complet*, chiefs and secretaries and their families ; and all foreigners of distinction of any nation who brought letters of introduction were cordially invited to the house. These ' Friday afternoons ' formed a happy meeting-ground where there was no formal etiquette to frighten away even the passing celebrity who had come merely for Rome itself and for sight-seeing, and was glad of this opportunity of meeting a kindred spirit, taking a cup of tea with the sunset in view, and bringing his quota of intelligent talk and observation. Varied and shifting as was the company, it was always interesting and uncommon, bringing different nationalities together for the interchange of ideas and thoughts in this very Old Rome ; and as it was not the centre of the fashionable crowd, the people who came might be supposed to have education and ideas to ventilate. It was strange sometimes to see a Monsignore in deep conversation with one of the dignitaries of the English Church, or some great Missionary Bishop from America talking with a Catholic Prelate of high degree : English Tories and Liberals exchanging views of the home news in the embrasure of a window : poets and artists, full of enthusiasm about some new work of art brought to light in the new excavations, making plans for visits to studios and galleries : authors discussing the new book just come out : ladies talking of the social events for the winter and their charities : whilst around the little tea-table in the corner the young people managed to get together to arrange their riding-parties on the Campagna, and schemes for amusing themselves generally. Rome was not too serious a place for the young, who could dance every night and ride to their hearts' content.

My mother had a charming frank way of receiving her guests and putting them at their ease and bringing out all that was best in them. The only people she seemed to intimidate were bores, and she froze them into nothingness—in spite of herself. Late in the afternoon my father would make his appearance from the studio, and it is difficult to express what life and light his presence brought into the room for those who have not felt it personally. He seemed like a bright spirit that permeated the whole place,

gay and full of life and interest and repartee, a word for everyone and something worth hearing. So simple, so cordial, and so full of interest in all that was being talked about, he would enter into everything, gay and serious. He revived everyone's spirits with his pleasant voice and manner. You would certainly never have thought that he had been hard at work all day in his studio. He left all that behind him and kept his cheerfulness for home and his friends. Difficult indeed was it to understand this youthful spring of life in him, when from early morning he had been hard at work embodying great serious thoughts in the clay—never even stopping for lunch or rest. One always felt a perennial spring of life welling up from within him. There was nothing from the smallest to the highest and deepest that was not within his sympathetic grasp of thought.

II.

There was hardly a year when we did not read aloud some book of Miss Austen's. Her characters were very real indeed to us, so much so that my father would often say, when we were ~~out~~ at a party :

' Doesn't that sound like Emma ? ' or ' Here's Mr. Knightly,' or ' This is Elizabeth.' If overheard, people naturally looked rather astonished, but my father and I understood each other. *À propos* of Miss Austen, my mother liked to tell a story against herself which much amused us.

One Friday afternoon when my mother was rather tired, owing to the number of people she had been seeing, the footman brought in a letter of introduction and a card on which was printed—as she thought—' Mr. Austen.' She merely glanced at the card, recalling its literary associations, and of course received Mr. Austin most politely, but as soon as he was seated, she turned to him and said :

' Are you the son of Miss Austen ? '

He grew very red in the face and answered bluntly :

' No, I am not. No relation.'

By his look she saw at once the blunder she had made, and tried vainly to explain ' literary associations, etc.,' but he did not understand or enter into the joke, and left the house almost immediately, when she in her dismay had time to read the letter of introduction from Thomas Adolphus Trollope :

"Villino Trollope.

‘MY DEAR STORY,—I venture to do by letter what, if I could have had the opportunity, I should much have liked to do *viva voce*—bring you and Alfred Austin, my valued friend, and a successful brother of the quill, together, and bid you know each other—right sure that I am doing a service to both parties. Austin comes to your rotten old eternal Magni Nominis Umbra, bringing with him his newly married wife, who and whose family were very highly valued friends of mine, and of my family long before I knew him. Mrs. Austin, *nata* Hester Mulock, is simply one of the most charming women I have ever known, and Rome is more fortunate than Florence in securing her presence for the winter.

‘With best regards to Mrs. Story, and a little grudging recollection of the failure of your half-promise to come up to see me here at Ricorboli the other day,

‘I am,

Yours always faithfully,

T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE.’

Needless to say, after this Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Austin often came to the house and were much appreciated guests there. In after-years Mr. Austin became the Poet Laureate. When my mother told this to the Brownings, Robert Browning said :

‘Poor Austin : that reminds me of what I did. I met him one day in London and he told me he had sent me a volume of his poems which he wanted me to promise to read. Of course I promised, and faithfully read every word. When I met him again shortly after, I told him that I had done so. He expressed regret, for he said the edition was full of blunders and misprints, and when I said I had not perceived them, he said :

‘“That was because it was the first time you read them, and when you read them the second time you will see what I mean.” To which I replied :

‘“That need not trouble you. Nobody will ever read them a second time.”’

Then my mother exclaimed :

‘There is something worse than I have done. One Friday at the end of the afternoon a gentleman was announced whom I did not know, and I did not hear his name. He joined the circle where several of my old friends were talking, the subject being how difficult it was to account for likes and dislikes. Looking the newcomer full in the face, I said very pointedly :

‘“It is always the old saying :

“ ‘ I do not like you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,
But this I know and know full well,
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.’ ”

‘ I saw that the gentleman did not respond and that he looked rather uneasy and presently rose to take his leave. When I looked at his card on the table, sure enough it was Dr. Fell ! ’

‘ Oh, Robert,’ said Mrs. Browning. ‘ You must tell them the dreadful thing you did the other day ! ’

It seems that Mr. Ticknor and his daughter were in Rome that winter. Miss Ticknor was a very stately lady from Boston, with the strictest ideas of propriety, and certainly no one would have taken liberties with her. One morning Browning was coming home from his constitutional morning walk, always absorbed in thought, when he met Miss Ticknor coming down the Porta Pinciana holding a little girl by the hand. He walked gaily up to them—chucked Miss Ticknor under the chin and shook hands stiffly with the little girl ! Miss Ticknor gave him a withering look and walked rapidly away, when he awoke to a consciousness of the mistake he had made, and rushed home to tell ‘ Ba ’ that his character was gone for ever !

III.

It was indeed a golden Friday when Hans Christian Andersen first came to see my mother, but it took me some time to realise that the tall, gaunt, unshapely, ugly person that came shambling into the room was really the Poet-author himself. I was quite speechless, and inch by inch I took in his strange personality. His face was,—yes, surely ugly, with a high receding forehead, scant hair long behind the ears, pointed nose and chin thrown forward. Large, very blue eyes—the redeeming feature of his face ; they were indeed the windows of his soul, for light and life shone in them—sometimes far away in some northern dreamland, and then again wit and fun filled them with fire and brightness. In after-days all one remembered was the expression of those eyes and not the homeliness of face and features. His garments were beyond description odd, not fitting him in the least, hanging loosely on his body as on a clothes-peg. He said that he was double-jointed, and in fact his legs bent in all directions, and his long arms swung to and fro like the pendulum of a clock when he walked with long strides in the street, swinging them backwards and forwards.

Looking out of the windows to see the view of Rome with the Ludovisi Gardens that my mother was always so eager to show to any of her guests, he became most enthusiastic, and for the rest of his visit he could not be induced to tear himself away from the window, leaning out so far that I feared he might fall out, and talking with the greatest animation of his 'Improvisatore,' for there before his eyes he could see : 'The Piazza Barberini, the great square with its beautiful fountain, where the Triton empties the spouting conch-shell, from which the water springs upward many feet, the house at the corner of Via Felice, the tall corner house where the water pours through three pipes out of the wall down into a stone basin. In that house the Improvisatore was born. If I look back to my tender youth, such a crowd of bright remembrances meet me that I scarcely know where to begin when I contemplate the whole drama of my life.'

There in the chamber at the top of the house was the Improvisatore's room—quite on the roof-top—and the church of the Capuchin where Fra Martino gave him his first lessons.

Andersen became a warm friend of my small brothers, and begged my mother to let him come sometimes to play with them in their nursery. In every town, he said, he had friends among the children ; it was a delight to him to have an hour's play with them, when he forgot himself and was a child again.

His visits to the nursery were always unexpected. He would come bounding up the long Barberini stairs, taking two steps at a time, with a face brimming over with fun and expectancy, nearly knocking over the footman who opened the door, and bouncing into the day nursery without so much as 'by your leave' to the stately English nurse who reigned paramount there. The boys, my brothers Waldo and Julian, rushed forward to meet him, climbed all over him, and a great romp at once began. On all-fours he would career round the room with them on his back, his double-jointed legs doing good service. Every chair and every table was enlisted in the games, all the toys came out of their orderly cupboards, and the room became a sort of battlefield in the romp, which continued until all three were thoroughly exhausted—hot and red in the face—then they sat down on the floor near the window to rest ; and to amuse them he cut out of paper the quaintest and most fanciful little things—a stage with dancers pirouetting, fairies, butterflies, clowns, and nutcrackers with wide open mouths and huge teeth. Then, his play hour over, he would suddenly dash out of the room

without saying so much as 'Jack Robinson,' and disappear as he had come.

On one of these occasions, my mother and I met him coming down the stairs. His face was aglow with excitement, his scanty hair all ruffled up. At first he hardly seemed to see us, his eyes were already far away; but on recognising us he stopped, and said he had enjoyed himself so much and that he had his pockets full of gifts from the boys—in fact they looked very bulgy. He then showed us some old broken toys they had given him—wooden horses without legs, lead soldiers that could not stand, a cart without a wheel! When my mother expostulated at his being so encumbered, he said that in Denmark he had a little shelf all round his room on which he kept the toys children had given him. Each toy was labelled with the child's name by whom it was given, and they were all broken toys that had been played with, full of sentiment for him. The quaint figure then bowed and vanished rapidly down the stairs away from childhood into that Roman artistic Bohemian life which had taken so much hold upon him.

Besides these nursery visits he came often to see us; and talking with me one day about some of his Fairy Tales, he told me that once, when he was passing through one of the small German principalities, he was invited by the Prince of the State to dinner. The Prince's little daughter asked her father to be allowed to speak to Mr. Andersen, as she had something very particular to say to him. When she came into the room where he was talking with some gentlemen, she went directly up to him and said :

'Mr. Andersen, you do not always speak the truth. After reading your story of "The Princess and the Parched Pea," I wanted to try the effect, and I had several peas put under only one mattress. I did not feel them at all, but slept soundly all night; and as there is no doubt that I am a real Princess, I have proved that you do not always tell the truth!'

He also told me of a little beggar girl who found her way to the house where lived the brothers Grimm, who have written so much for children. She rang the door-bell timidly and one of the brothers went to open it. Outside he saw a small ragged little girl with a pinched thin face and hungry eyes. She asked :

'Are you one of the Grimm brothers?'

To his reply that he was, she said :

'I have been reading the story in which you say: "If anyone does not believe it they must bring me a penny." I don't believe

a word of it, so here's your penny,' which she thrust into his hand, and before he could answer ran rapidly down the stairs and disappeared !

The great event of that winter in our little world was a children's party given by my mother. Andersen was one of the first to arrive. He was a child again, beaming with delight—one of the most joyous of the little troupe. After games, in which he took a most active part, we asked him to read one of his fairy tales; so he sat down on the floor, tucking his long legs under him, all the children sitting in a circle around him, and read 'The Ugly Duckling.' When the English words were difficult for him, my father came to his rescue. He seemed to enjoy the tale as if it were quite new to him, and chuckled with delight when the end came and all the children applauded. I wish I could remember all the elders who closed round the inner circle of children, but I can recall Mrs. Browning as she sat enjoying every word, her spirit hand resting on her boy's fair, curly head; and Hattie Hosmer with her bright boyish face. My father then suggested that Mr. Browning should read us the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin.' Taking Andersen's place in the little charmed circle, with Andersen close to him and eagerly interested, he read with the greatest possible spirit, and never had he a more appreciative audience. As he got to the end, my father, who had gone silently out of the room, appeared in an old flowered dressing-gown with a pointed paper cap on his head and his flute in hand. The children at once took up the idea, and my father playing on the flute dashed through all the rooms, the children following him, and Andersen so excited that he jumped over several chairs, and at last fell down quite exhausted, which called forth a shout from the children :

'He is the lame boy.'

Round the corner of the door came the shaggy nose of the little donkey my brothers rode. He had come up all the long stairs bedecked and garlanded. He too was the children's friend, and after being smothered with hugs and kisses by the little ones, he was led by Andersen into the tea-room, where he could munch and crunch sugar to his vast content.

Oh, the joyous happy day ! The old rooms in the Barberini rang with laughter so loud that it must have frightened the whole hive of golden bees, and scattered them broadcast over Rome !

So much for the 'Children's Hour,' in which I too had my place. But Andersen's steps often led him up to my father's

studio, where he would watch him at work, mindful of his early days in Thorwaldsen's studio. His sympathetic, appreciative presence gave great pleasure to my father, and one day, his last in Rome, he timidly pressed into my father's hands a little slip of paper on which was written a few lines in Old Danish dedicated to him :

' Great though thou art—for since in measured clang
Thy steel inspired on the brute mass rang,
Hero's endless woe stilled into stone we see,
And rapt Beethoven lists his harmony,—
Thou scorn'st not, tho' the Laurel wreath is thine,
One frail leaf more—this poor, weak song of mine.'¹

In my precious little book with the gold key, Andersen wrote the lines :

' Les cordages de la Marine Anglaise sont traversés d'un fil rouge, qui constate qu'ils appartiennent à la couronne. La vie humaine, dans les petites choses, autant que les grandes, est traversée d'un fil invisible qui constate qu'elle sera à Dieu.

' HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

' Rom, 21 May 1861.'

A year later Thackeray asked me to let him write on the same page :

' Having to translate the above sentence at the Competitive Examination for the Wooden Spoon Scholarship at Brazenose College, the Hon. Charles, third son of Rt. Honable. Lord Dundreary, sent in the following version :

' "The corduroys of the British Marines are crossed with a red stripe to show they belong to the crown. The human life in the little things as much as the great is traversed by an invisible son, who is constantly saying good-bye."

' My Dear Edith,—This is not as good a joke as "Young Brodie and the Coo," twenty pages ahead, but it is VERY NEARLY as good, and as such is respectfully offered to you by your old friend,

' W. M. THACKERAY.

' Kensington, October 29, 1862.'

After Andersen left Rome, in May 1861, we often heard from him. The following letter to my brothers, introducing the composer Grieg, testifies to his constant remembrance of them :

¹ It has been difficult to get the above translated, it being in old Danish, and I owe this rendering to the kindness of Prince Franz Lichtenstein, who has procured it for me.

'Copenhagen, Sept. 14, 1863.'

'To my two little friends from America, sons of the sculptor Story, my best love and warm thanks for the beautiful portrait they sent to me from Rome. I return to you my photograph, a copy for each.

'The bearer of this note is the young talented composist from Norway, Mr. Grieg, who I take the liberty of introducing to the amiable family Story.

'Believe me to be truly yours,

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.'

In the years that have followed this 'long ago,' I have been reminded by Mrs. Browning's son of the pleasure his mother had felt in being one of the children's party that winter. It was perhaps one of the brightest days to her beautiful soul, so soon to be taken from us, as it was almost the last time she was able to leave her house before going back to Florence. Her mind was full of this northern light that had come to us, and it is pathetic to feel that her last poem, written May 1861, 'The North and the South,' was inspired by him.

THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH.

The Last Poem.

I.

'Now give us lands where the olives grow,'
Cried the North to the South,
'Where the sun with a golden mouth can blow
Blue bubbles of grapes down a vineyard row !'
Cried the North to the South.

'Now give us men from the sunless plain,'
Cried the South to the North,
'By need of work in the snow and rain,
Made strong and brave by familiar pain !'
Cried the South to the North.

II.

'Give lucider hills and intenser seas,'
Said the North to the South,
'Since ever by symbols and bright degrees
Art, childlike, climbs to the dear Lord's knees,'
Said the North to the South.

' Give strenuous souls for belief and prayer,
Said the South to the North,
' That stand in the dark on the lowest stair,
While affirming of God, " He is certainly there,"
Said the South to the North.

III.

' Yet oh ! for the skies that are softer and higher ! '
Sighed the North to the South ;
' For the flowers that blaze, and the trees that aspire,
And the insects made of a song or a fire ! '
Sighed the North to the South.

' And oh, for a seer to discern the same ! '
Sighed the South to the North ;
' For a poet's tongue of baptismal flame,
To call the tree or the flower by its name ! '
Sighed the South to the North.

IV.

The North sent therefore a man of men
As a grace to the South ;
And thus to Rome came Andersen.
' Alas, but must you take him again ? '
Said the South to the North.

THE NEW PARENTS' ASSISTANT.

I.

BEGGARS ALL.

Of the countless miracles which we take for granted, this surely is the most bewildering, that we have children. Neither science nor religion can measure this wonder of wonders. It may well shake the universe, and influence the music of the spheres, that I am a parent. But, as things are nowadays, to be a miracle is to incur grave responsibilities. I must not content myself with staggering Heaven : I must also attend to Home. Miracles must not think too much of themselves : there are the children to be considered. And, when I face quietly what I mean by my responsibility for the children, I am up against a problem which seems to be insoluble.

It presents itself to me thus. We two, man and wife, who are the efficient cause of our children's being, are thereby the sole agents of every false step that they take, every sin that they commit, every cruelty that they inflict, every pain that they suffer. All maladies that have come or are to come on them, all disappointment, all disgrace, are of our making ; and their death will be our handiwork.

I call it a problem ; but it has the clear-cut look of a fact. If it were not for parents, there would be none of these disasters. For the children would not be here ; they would be nowhere : and, so long as they were nowhere, they could neither sin nor suffer. It is idle to answer that parents are likewise the agents of all virtue, happiness, and health in their children's lives. It is true, but it has nothing to do with the matter. For the children, if they had not been born, would have lost nothing ; you cannot begin to lose things till you are here to lose them. Doubtless, if they could have had their choice, to be or not to be, they would have chosen to be. But they could not have their choice : for they were not here ; they were nowhere. You cannot begin to choose things till you are here to choose them.

It is said, now and again, in defence of shooting, ' If the pheasants had been given their choice, not to live, or to live well-fed and well-protected to the moment of their death, they would have chosen to live.' The like defence is made of hunting. Or take the case of the pig, that mass of evidence against vegetarianism. The

alchemy of the pig, its transmutation of the contents of the trough, affords it unfailing satisfaction ; and, if it had been given its choice, I feel sure that it would have chosen to come here and be our alchemist. But neither pheasant, fox, nor pig was given its choice. Besides, what business have we to be considering these lower creatures, we who are parents ? For we have called not animals but spirits from the vasty deep, and they came when we did call for them. By which act, we are the cause of all their distresses.

Out of the reach of words, and high above the tangle of my thinking, some transcendental explanation waits, in the vain hope that I may be able to pull it down. Meanwhile, the fact is at my elbow, clamouring for immediate attention, and something to be done. If we parents—and who can doubt it ?—are indeed the cause of all discord and pain among our children, it is time that something should be done. We must put things right with them, we must make it up to them. But we cannot incessantly do penance before them ; nor would it be of any use. Once they are here, it is too late for us to be sorry that we brought them here. If one of them tells a lie, or strikes the baby, or has a toothache—that I may take no graver instances—we cannot rend our garments each time, declaring ourselves guilty. But that is what we are: for there would have been neither lie nor blow nor toothache, if it had not been for us. How shall we expiate our offence against them ? There is nothing to be done, for there is nothing that can be undone. But we must do something, for we brought them here ; and we knew that they would again and again do wrong, and be in pain—and all the same we brought them here.

This attitude of contrition is in strict accord with the facts of the case ; none the less, it is rather like a circus-horse going down on its knees, in the sawdust, at the crack of a whip ten yards away. My conscience, stand up on your feet like a man, square your shoulders, and remember the words of Cordelia to her father :

‘Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me ; I
Return those duties back as are right fit :
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.’

That is the children’s way. They thank us for being their parents ; and some of them, at school or at college, think of us when they hear the text, *Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers who begat us.* They do not doubt that we did well to bring them here,

they honour us as the authors of their being ; and on Commemoration Day they extend to us the oath of allegiance, and exalt us into the company of the famous men.

Thus content with us, and more than content, they do not, as they might, call us to account, when things go hard with them. I am acquainted—who is not?—with a small child, half a century old, who, on a black day of detected naughtiness, said, *I wish I had never been born.* But he was not thinking of his parents when he said it ; nor did he say it to them, but to himself. Besides, if he had said it to them, he would have been rebuked, not for filial impiety, but for blasphemy. It is wicked to wish that you had never been born—it is an offence against God, the Author of your being. So we tell the children, or so we used to tell them, or so we ought to tell them ; and they admit the rebuke, and say to their Maker, that evening, that they are sorry they spoke. Only, half a century hence, at the present rate of development of free thought in the nursery, there may come a change. I see one of my great-grandchildren, on her way downstairs, in her nightgown, just before bed ; she has been crying, but there is a touch of laughter about her lips : and she marches into the drawing-room, and holds up her little head, and she says to her parents, says she, *I'm sorry I wished I had never been born ; it was not very polite to—you.* And I see them, to my horror, accepting her apology, as if it belonged to them : though they are neither the authors, nor the editors, of her being, or of any other being : they are only one of four causes—formal, material, efficient, and final. None the less, they accept her apology, they forgive her what they have done ; and she goes back to bed. My thin ghost, that evening, in the drawing-room, will surely find some way of suggesting to them that they are indeed the efficient cause of her offence. For, if it had not been for them, she would never have been born to wish that she had never been born. He can hardly fail to get them to agree to that. They will make up their minds that something must be done ; but nothing in a hurry. My ghost must not be too sanguine.

Holding fast this theory, bearing all your weight on the assurance that our children's miseries are of our making, father or mother, whichever you are, say what is to be done. Where is the path of atonement, the way of amends ? It goes from us to them ; we must examine ourselves, not them, to find it. We require, therefore, not more child-study, but more parent-study. *The child*—that is what the believers in child-study dare to call my children.

As if anybody could study that. *The oyster* we can study, because all oysters are so alike ; but we cannot study *the child, or the parent* ; only children and parents. Let each of us, to begin with, study and examine that one parent whom each of us best understands.

But the intricacies of self are closer twisted than the maze at Hampton Court. One must have a guide. At Hampton Court there is the man on the little platform, just outside the maze and just above it. When we are tired of missing our way, he shouts at us, directing us till we find our way. None of us would think of contradicting him ; for he is outside and above the maze.

My dear self, I have found the very thing for you. It will guide you to the end of your perplexity ; it will tell you where you are ; it will give you, with absolute authority, a clear indication of your surroundings, which you will not think of contradicting. I found it, just outside the maze and just above it, in the Burial Service, of all unlikely places. It is in the words, *We brought nothing into this world.* That is what the Burial Service says of us fathers and mothers, even of us, who have brought children into this world. But who would contradict the saying ? For he and she were only one of four causes, and that not the best of the four. To be the final cause of children—I mean, of course, children so good as mine—would be a distinction worth having ; nobody could then say that I had brought nothing into this world. But, so far as I can judge, they are the final cause of me, not I of them. I was only one half of their efficient cause. But what is the use, here, of words ? The children are given, consigned, entrusted to us—all words are but sounds ; and I admire the reserve of Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so, in this morning's paper, *Of a son.* I will be bound that they said much more than that to each other, especially if it was their first-born. But so soon as the doctor was gone, and she was asleep, and her husband began to think of telling the good news to the public,

‘Something sealed
The lips of that Evangelist,’

and he only said, *Of a son.* The wonder and the blessing of a life come to lives, and them his wife and himself, were past all telling to the public. He was perfectly right ; words are of no use whatever : let us only say *Of a son*, or, better still, *Of a daughter*.

That we brought nothing into this world is a disclosure of ourselves which we forget to make to the children. We leave them

to learn it, not from us, but of us. It comes to them when they are most wanting us to come to them. It is read aloud to them, this hard saying, by him who is taking the funeral. He walks very slowly, as if he were trying to keep back from them what is behind him ; but they know that it is there, and it comes level with them, compelling them to look. Let them hold out this half-hour, and it will be taken away, got rid of, buried, burned—Oh, you poor children, why did I leave it to the day of my funeral for you to be told that I brought nothing into this world ? I ought to have told you myself, showed you my empty hands, long ago ; I could have made you laugh with me over my poverty ; we would have called it, in Mrs. Eddy's delightful phrase, my native nothingness ; you should have chaffed me, and I you ; for it was no fault of mine ; there was nothing to conceal or be ashamed of ; and I might have explained it all so lightly to you then, so happily—not left it to be read out to you now, over my coffin, to add to your misery, and you crying the whole time. Beggars all : that is what we are.

Into this world we are born, what there is of us, empty-handed, empty-headed, empty-hearted ; we bring nothing. If we were to wait till we had something to bring, we should never get here. So soon as we are here, we begin to acquire something. First, a breath of air ; then soap and water, clothing, mother's milk, a cradle, and sleep. These seven gifts—counting the soap and the water as two—are bestowed on us within the first few hours. Other gifts, in due time, are added to them, such as teeth, a perambulator, the power to stand, the power to speak, more teeth, picture-books, and some sense of difference between right and wrong. We have nothing to do with the coming of these gifts : they just come, and we receive them. So it is, and will be to the end, with all our gifts. They arrive, and we take them in, like so many Christmas presents, at the front door of the house of life. Every beat of my heart is somehow a gift ; and the same is true of all such advantages as I have obtained from inheritance, education, patronage, example, experience, and friendship. None of us is more than a point, which has neither parts nor magnitude, in a perpetual movement of giving.

But the children do not regard us in this light. When a mother plays to her children, or makes them new frocks, they do not say that she has the gift of music, the gift of dressmaking. They are of opinion that she is clever at music and at frocks ; clever because she

is clever, and good because she is good, and beautiful because she is beautiful : and there they stop, not looking beyond her for any explanation of her. All that we do for them is put to our credit ; they call it, all of it, us. When they are grown up, they will call it human nature, or the parental instinct, or the force of habit—which will be even more stupid than calling it us. Overhaul the Pope's soliloquy in 'The Ring and the Book,' line 1073, and when found make a note of.

See how difficult is the pursuit of parent-study ; we are already back at child-study, we who ought to be looking in ourselves to find the path of atonement. Examination of ourselves tells us that all our gifts were given to us, and all the good in us has come into us from outside ; that we are beggars all ; that we are points, having no parts and no magnitude, only position—and we did not make even our positions for ourselves. In brief, what has been made of us is what we are. Of ourselves, we are nothing.

We ought to rub this fact well into the children. If we do not, we are neglecting an opportunity to put things right with them. We shall draw them closer to us, and we shall purify and strengthen their religion, if we explain to them the predicament in which we stand. No need to be solemn over it ; our plight is comic, not tragic : we are the Emperor who had nothing on.

But the best of all opportunities belongs to those parents who will confess their faults to their children. We may well dislike this duty, and reserve it for great purposes ; and all of us will hide more than we shall uncover. But there is no way so straight and sure to their hearts. One act of confession will avail more between them and us than many acts of correction. Assailed by our united forces of advice, warning, and punishment, they can still hold out ; but the sound of the note of confession brings down the drawbridge, and they welcome us into the fortress, and sign peace with us, and more than peace. We disarm them as it were by magic, we quicken loyalty in them ; and their minds, years later, go back to that day. I have long forgotten innumerable occasions when my father was right and I was wrong ; but I remember clearly an occasion when he said that he had been wrong, and I right : though it is open to doubt whether he was. More than thirty-five years ago, on a Sunday evening, in Munich, I was aching all over to escape from the hotel dinner to the opera. He utterly disapproved of Sunday theatre-going ; but he said, *I leave it to you to decide.* Early next morning, he came to my bedroom, and said

that he had been thinking it over carefully, and that he thought, on the whole, as I was so fond of music, that I had done right in going. I am not likely to forget him thus humbling himself to me. There is a similar story of Darwin :

'He had,' says Sir Francis Darwin, 'a horror of drinking, and constantly warned his boys that any one might be led into drinking too much. I remember, in my innocence as a small boy, asking him if he had ever been tipsy ; and he answered very gravely that he was ashamed to say he had once drunk too much at Cambridge. I was much impressed, so that I know now the place where the question was asked.'

These are the impressions which endure when other impressions, most deep for a time, have long faded off the surface of memory. Tell your children of their faults, and they will forget what you are saying ; tell them of your own, and they will remember the very place where you said it half a century ago. Besides, it is not as if we could hide our faults ; they stick out, most of them, like the broken ribs of an old umbrella. The reference here is to the first chapter of 'The Little White Bird'—'That strange short hour of the day, when every mother stands revealed before her little son.'

Against all these pages of good advice to parents, one objection makes itself heard, knocking persistently, like the tassel of a blind in a draught. Do stand up, it says ; don't grovel, don't let the children see you like that, looking so silly. Teach them self-confidence, self-help, strength of will, and a firm grip on the realities of life. Do get up, out of the gutter. You are not setting them a good example.

But facts are facts, wherever we find them ; and pearls of great value, a whole string of them, were found not long ago in the gutter. Of course, we must set a good example to the children ; but the best way to ensure that, is to set them the example of somebody better than ourselves. Any good example will do, provided it is not our own, but a better article. My dear, I will gladly set your example before our children, if you will kindly set before them mine.

STEPHEN PAGET.

THE ILLUSTRIOS GARRISON.

FROM time to time chance, circumstance, or design have applied epithets to men and to events which ' on the stretched forefinger of all time sparkle for ever.' In 1842 Lord Ellenborough, Governor-General of the East Indies, giving the rein to his inherent admiration for deeds military, applied, in his general order announcing the belated successes in Afghanistan, the term ' Illustrious Garrison ' to the troops which held Jellalabad for many weary months. The army scoffed somewhat, as armies will, just as the army on the Modder talked of Buller the Ferryman, and the army in Natal scoffed at that relieving Kimberley, and as the troops on the heights of Inkerman scoffed at the Light Brigade. It is the way of armies and is not all evil. The ' Illustrious Garrison ' was better known as ' Sale's Brigade ' at the time, but later the Governor-General's epithet stuck in men's minds when memory, as to the particular event that had evoked it, faded.

H.M. 13th Foot, now the Somersetshire Light Infantry, carry to this day among their honourable devices the mural crown, that stock heraldic emblem to commemorate a siege. They alone of that garrison still figure in the Army List. The gallant, patient, faithful 35th Native Infantry who, like Clive's sepoyes at Arcot, gave up their rations to the Europeans, blew up with nine-tenths of the Bengal Army in that cataclysm of '57, carrying away with them a century of history. Backhouse's Mountain Train, Ferris' Jezailchis, Broadfoot's Sappers, remain but in the pages of military annals. The famous 13th alone are still in being.

How the ' Illustrious Garrison ' earned the epithet, and why, is a thrice-told tale, but one that fades constantly. It is full of interesting sidelights, too, on the wars of the English, and worthy of being re-studied.

How and why the British came to be in Afghanistan at all is a long story, and one which had its beginning half a century before. In August 1798 there was published in London, by

one John Fairburn, of 146 The Minories, a coloured map styled as follows :

' Fairburn's New Chart,
Exhibiting
THE ROUTE OF GENERAL BUONAPARTE

in the Mediterranean Sea.
With the countries through which the French Army must
pass, viz :

Egypt and the Red Sea and the Gulf of Persia
TO MANGALORE

In the territory of Tippoo Sahib in the East Indies.

At that time, and in the years immediately following it, Napoleon Buonaparte and the Emperor of Russia were making plans for the invasion of India by land, coupling with the original proposals the intention of coming to the assistance of 'Citizen Tippoo.' From that day onwards the Bear has ever cast his shadow forward on the borders of India. The defence of India was the subject of many memoranda and pamphlets so far back as the opening years of the nineteenth century, and by 1835 was the subject of anxious study for statesmen and strategists. More immediate, at the beginning for that century, however, was the danger from Afghanistan and the Dourannie Empire. The Emperor, Zeman Shah, was constantly threatening another invasion, and half India looked for him to help drive the English to the sea. For many centuries the men of the North had poured into Hindostan at will, and for the last fifty years the Dourannis had been struggling with the Marathas for the source of power. Russia and Afghanistan together therefore had long loomed large, and these facts should be borne in mind when we try to gauge the impressions of the day. In those early years of the nineteenth century, too, our activities in Persia had been considerable, directed, above all things, to countering the French interest and ambition. The constant wars between the Afghans and the Sikhs and the requirements of commerce in opening up the navigation of the Indus all combined to make us sensitive, even so far back as the thirties, to the trend of events in Afghanistan and beyond.

In 1837 Mahomed Shah, the Shah-in-Shah of Persia, sent a large army to conquer Herat, with Russian officers attached to it. Shah Kamran, the Viceroy of the Province, one of the few of the original blood royal of Kabul, determined to hold the city, and embarked on a defence which lasted from November 1837 to September 1838,

when a threat of a British expedition in the Persian Gulf, and the persistence of the defence, into which Eldred Pottinger had so opportunely dropped, caused the Persians to raise the siege. In 1836 Captain Alexander Burnes proceeded to Sind and Kabul on a diplomatic and commercial mission. Friendly though his reception at Kabul was, nothing definite resulted, and there was also present one Nikovitch, an energetic young Russian *avant-courier*. Eventually the failure of Burnes' mission, the attack by the Persians on Herat, and a desire to create a strong and friendly Afghanistan, resulted in the treaty between the British, Ranjeet Singh Maharajah of the Sikhs, and Shah Shoojah, the exiled ruler of Kabul, to place the latter on the throne of his fathers as an ally and protégé of the British.

How the British Army crawled from Ferozepore on the Sutlej, where it had assembled, down the Indus to Sukkur, up the Bolan to Quetta, and thence to Kandahar, hampered by want of carriage, immense baggage, and cholera, may be read in any history of the time. Once in the granary and fruit garden of Kandahar, the now united forces from Bengal and Bombay recovered from the fatigues and disasters of their journey, while the exiled King was by way of taking over his new provinces. The next stage was the advance on Kabul, in which the capture of the historic fortress of Ghuzni by a *coup de main* was a brilliant episode. During the whole of the long circuitous route from the borders of the Punjab to Kabul the storming of Ghuzni was the only important military action, though there had been skirmishes and harassments galore.

The Army of the Indus, as the force was called, started from Ferozepore in December—9,500 fighting men, 38,000 followers, and 30,000 camels. The baggage of the officers was immense, while the military authorities had no knowledge of how to reduce it. It was the end of April before the force reached Kandahar, having been joined at Sukkur by a force from Bombay. With the Army had advanced also the Shah's Contingent, a force hastily raised in the northern cantonments of India from indifferent material, commanded by British officers lent to the Shah's service. It was not till the first week in August 1839 that the Shah and Sir John Keane arrived at Kabul. Dost Mahomed, usually termed 'the Dost,' the popular elected ruler of Afghanistan, fled, abandoning a large park of artillery, while the Shah re-entered his capital and the palace fort of the Bala Hissar, from which his subjects had expelled him years before.

The object of the expedition had therefore been attained.

The Shah sat on the throne of his fathers. His Contingent garrisoned his capital and his outposts, and had been increased by enlistments of his own subjects. But it was not possible to abandon him to his own resources. The methods of an Afghan ruler to those who belonged to opposing factions alone tied our hands. While we were there we could not acquiesce in Afghan methods. Yet if we foist an unpopular ruler on a turbulent people, and are too nice to let him strengthen his position by the only means he and his enemies recognise, we must take the consequences. The consequences were that for many reasons we could not abandon the Shah to his own resources, nor could we avoid appearing the real wielders of sovereignty. We reduced the costly army of occupation, but still had to garrison the country with our own troops. A British force escorted the whole of the Shah's large female establishment across the Punjab and up the Khyber to Kabul, including the old blind Emperor, Shah Zeman, the father of Shah Shoojah. Perhaps of all the actions of that time, the one we can least understand was the despatch also of the families of our own officers and men to Kabul. Right across the alien and increasingly hostile Punjab, up the Khyber and subsequent passes to Kabul itself, went the British ladies with their nurses, and their babies, and their pianos, to the new cantonment at Kabul, and with them the families of the British and native soldiers, all by way of adding to the activity and mobility of a force isolated by several hundred miles of difficult roads from our own territory. To us in these days, who will not allow ladies even into our frontier posts, the arrangement is astounding. However, so it was. During the remainder of 1839 and through 1840 the surface was calm, and our officers at Kandahar, at Ghuzni, and at Kabul, lived the life of a cantonment as if they had been in distant Hindostan. We read in Sir Neville Chamberlain's life, of officers of the Ghuzni garrison riding into Kabul for the Christmas festivities, or for the races, as if it had been Poona or Meerut.

In 1841 the situation had become more openly menacing. The principal forces in Afghanistan were Elphinstone's brigade at Kabul, and Nott's at Kandahar, with the Contingent scattered about the province, chiefly in Kabul, and in the Kohistan or mountain tracts north of Kabul. The year had begun with everything *couleur de rose*. The Dost, after an unsuccessful incursion into the Kohistan, had surrendered and had been sent to an honourable captivity in India. Towards the summer, however, risings

began to break out, each month growing more perplexing. The Ghilzais between Kabul and Jellalabad were especially warlike. There was no regular line of communication between Kabul and Peshawur, though posts of Khyber 'Rangers,' the forerunners of the Khyber 'Rifles' of to-day, were dotted along it. Now and again forces moving in relief marched up the road, and stores came through by contract with Ghilzai camel-owners. Sale, with the 13th and other troops, was due to return to India, and it was decided to send him to tackle the Ghilzais. In October 1841 Monteath and Broadfoot moved out on the Jellalabad road, and were shortly joined by Sale with the 13th and other troops.

For a whole month this force marched, halted, and fought with the Ghilzais between Kabul and Jellalabad, with no great success, suffering considerably in the process. All the snipers from Snipersville congregated along the line of march. The force marched by the southerly route of the Khurd Kabul and Jagdallak Passes, arriving at Jellalabad on November 12. About November 8 a report of the serious trouble that had broken out in Kabul reached them, with the news of the murder of Sir Alexander Burnes and several others (including Broadfoot's brother). Sale at this time received orders to return to Kabul, but in view of the extreme fatigues of the passage through the passes, the difficulty of supply on the road back, and the debilitated state of his transport, he decided that this was impossible, and that he must move on to Jellalabad. His rearguard had been pursued and harassed right up to the walls of that town, into which he decided to move, after examination of its defences, on the next day.

The force that actually arrived at Jellalabad and constituted the 'Illustrious Garrison' was as follows :

H.M. 13th Light Infantry—Colonel Dennie.
35th Bengal Native Infantry—Colonel Monteath.
Detachment Bengal Artillery—Captain Abbott.
Squadron 5th Cavalry—Captain Oldfield.
Shah's Mountain Train—Captain Backhouse.
Shah's Sappers—Captain Broadfoot.
Troop 2nd Shah's Cavalry—Lieut. Mayne.
Shah's Jezailchis (200)—Jan Fishan Khan.

This force had no supplies, only 150 rounds ball ammunition per rifle, and had no base or line of communications to feed it. What it could take by force, or purchase for money, was all it had to live on. It was not therefore to be wondered at that its com-

mander hesitated to return to Kabul. Captain Havelock of the 13th was the brigade-major and Captain MacGregor of the Bengal Artillery was political officer.

The town of Jellalabad lies perhaps a half of the way between Peshawur and Kabul. Coming up through the Khyber Pass, the country opens out to some extent into the plains of Ningrahar, before the road to Kabul enters the fearsome defiles of the Lataband, Seh Baba, and Khurd Kabul Passes. Jellalabad stands on the Kabul river near where the Kunar river from Chitral joins the former. North of the town lie the mountains of Kafiristan, that land of fable from which Sir George Scott Robinson has lifted the veil in modern times and destroyed romance. For long had the world dreamed of an isolated race descended of Alexander's Greeks; and it was only a dream. With the exploration of Kafiristan and the penetration of a British force into Lhassa have disappeared, perhaps, the last two fairy-stories of Asia. Any that may remain will come from the storehouses of Khotan and the researches of Dr. Stein. However that may be, the Kafiristan hills, that land of a strange race that knows not Islam nor Indra, look down from the north on Jellalabad, while to the south towers the huge snow line of the Sufaid Koh. West lies Kabul, and east lies India.

Jellalabad is a walled town, with curtains and bastions of sun-dried mud bricks, plastered with mud and chopped straw, a material only possible where rains are but seasonal. Round the walls stretched gardens and orchards, also surrounded with crumbling walls, the relics of a day when Mogul and Dourannie Emperors pitched their camp there during a passage through their dominions. Apples, apricots, and peaches grew in some profusion; the almond-tree flourished and the vineyards yielded heavily. As Kabul lost its touch with India, Jellalabad lost its importance, and its gardens fell into ruin. Outside the walls, old tombs of dead nobles crumbled to decay, willow-trees grew on the irrigation cuts, and clumps of Lombardy poplars edged the approaches. It was a difficult place to defend with the area outside the walls so encumbered.

Such, however, was the engineering problem before Captain George Broadfoot of the Madras Infantry, commandant of the Shah's Sappers, more generally known as Broadfoot's Sappers, and field engineer to Sale's Brigade. In addition to the obstacles and enclosures referred to, an old wall lay outside the town, and had collected that ever-shifting sand which is so marked a feature of the Suliman range and its valleys. High sandhills at a range of

from 500 to 1,000 yards had thus been formed to the west and south-west. The Afghans at once attempted to invest the town from this side while a piper played for them on one of the sandhills. A sortie was successful, and obtained a fortnight's quiet, which enabled Broadfoot to work at the defences and MacGregor to collect supplies from any who would sell.

All November the brigade rested and worked at the defences till, on the 28th, the enemy closed and had to be driven off by another sortie. During the month rumours of more trouble and of a capitulation at Kabul were rife. In December little occurred save that Colonel Wild, with a brigade of sepoy battalions, reached Peshawur, the said Peshawur, be it remembered, being many hundred miles across a semi-hostile country from the British frontier at Ferozepore. At the very end of December came rumours of the murder of Sir William Macnaghten, the Envoy.

On January 9, three Achakzai horsemen arrived with an order from General Elphinstone to quit Jellalabad and march to Peshawur. As Akhbar Khan, who was investing them, had issued proclamations to all the tribes to attack them, Sale refused to budge without further instructions. Up in Kabul the murders, first of Sir Alexander Burnes in his house in the city, and later of the Envoy at a Durbar, had thrown the garrison of Kabul into a terrible state. Commanded by an aged, bedridden general, with the senior officers under him at loggerheads, vacillation and pusillanimity brought a British army to humiliation never before experienced. The authorities at Kabul signed an agreement to withdraw from the country in the height of a snowy winter. The horror and the pity of it comes afresh to every one who reads the tale anew. By no writer has it been so powerfully or so pitifully described as by the author of the recently published 'Judgment of the Sword.'

Sale, knowing that the Kabul force was expecting to come to Jellalabad, decided that he would wait and unite with them rather than march ahead. It was argued at Jellalabad that a commander who capitulates can only do so for the troops under his immediate orders. While thus thinking and waiting, the end of the tragedy came to pass. One afternoon, January 13, officers at the gate of Jellalabad saw a solitary horseman advancing on a staggering horse. It was Dr. Brydon, the only survivor of Elphinstone's brigade, which had been cut to pieces and destroyed in the passes: 4,500 British and Indian soldiers, 12,000 followers, and an incubus of women and children beyond compute. They had marched out of

Kabul into the bitter snow, and, with the exception of a few prisoners, had perished. To this day even their bones lie unburied in the Khurd Kabul and Jagdallak Passes and were visible to our armies in 1878-80.

Lady Butler has painted the scene and caught the atmosphere. Everyone knows 'The Remnant of an Army,' poor Brydon in his sheepskin coat and his staggering pony—Brydon, who was to have his full share of stress and strain, for he was later to form part of the original garrison of the Residency at Lucknow. A few years ago, when the author of 'The Judgment of the Sword' was writing 'The Hero of Herat' it fell to the present writer to accord the concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief in India to her being supplied with copies of certain documents in the Indian Records. The file of records, beautifully arranged, was full of old faded letters. It was as though half the ghosts in India had walked through the room. There was a letter from Lady Sale at Kabul to her husband at Jellalabad to the effect that that 'rotten ass Macnaghten had had his throat cut, and if the old fools in Kabul had their way the same would happen to all of them.' Lady Sale was something of an old soldier, and had a way of expressing herself frankly. Then there was a letter from MacGregor, the political officer at Jellalabad, to Lawrence or Wild to the effect that 'a certain Dr. Brydon had just ridden in wounded and near dead with fatigue and somewhat incoherent, but it would appear that some terrible disaster had occurred,' in which guess he was certainly right.

So on January 13 the fat was in the fire. Sir Robert Sale was very much on his own responsibility as the sole representative of British power in Northern Afghanistan, with his wife and daughters in the hands of the enemy or dead in the snow.

In 1888 appeared 'The Career of Major George Broadfoot, C.B.,' by Major William Broadfoot, R.E., which revived old controversies, and probably for the first time put the true history of the 'Illustrious Garrison' in a clear manner. That garrison was invested and attacked for three months, when it finally took heart of grace, and on April 7 sallied forth and heavily fell on the Afghan army, capturing their guns and raising the siege. A few days later, the avenging army under Pollock, having forced the Khyber, arrived at Jellalabad to find the garrison free men.

Now the story of how the British troops came to remain at that place is full of psychological interest to those who study military character, and can separate the issues that are before them. The

night after Brydon had staggered in, Broadfoot, as garrison engineer, went to Sale and urged that unless he was prepared to defend the place to the last and take full measures therefor, he should retreat that night. Sale, relying on help from Wild, wrote to the Commander-in-Chief in India that he intended to hold out to the last, and urging early relief. A few days later Wild failed in his attempt to force the Khyber, and Sale became appalled at the gravity of the situation. On January 26, he and Captain MacGregor summoned a council of war to hear a scheme they had prepared for an evacuation of Jellalabad under convention with the Afghans. It should be said that the news of the disasters had paralysed the Governor-General and his Government at Calcutta, and Sale believed that no one would stir a finger to help them or rescue the prisoners, among whom were most of the English ladies who had been in Kabul.

Broadfoot alone bitterly and violently opposed the proposal, urging a defence to the bitter end. He was at first reproached with his impossible attitude, and the council adjourned. Meeting again, Broadfoot still stood his ground, and soon Oldfield, of the Cavalry, followed by Backhouse, of the Artillery, supported him. The question of giving hostages helped to clinch matters. Eventually Dennie and Abbott came to the same view, and Sale was persuaded at last to yield to the bolder course. Broadfoot at once set to work vigorously on a ditch round the walls, and shortly came news from Peshawur that every effort would be made to come to their assistance. It was due to the strong character of Broadfoot that the council of war determined to adopt that course which redounded so much to their honour and so prominently helped to maintain some remnant of British prestige. The council did not finally dissolve till February 12, by which time the defences were getting into excellent order. Mayne, the leader of the troop of the 2nd Shah's Horse, had captured a number of sheep and cattle, and the spirits of the force rose considerably.

Sale's attitude at this juncture is specially interesting because it shows him to have been, like so many good soldiers of our own and other armies, excellent as a subordinate leader, but quite unfit for supreme command, and paralysed when called on to assume responsibility and display initiative. Sturdy courage and obedience to instructions is a characteristic of such men, who are among the most reliable assets in an army—so long as their limitations be known. Our history teems with examples of them and their success when subordinate, and of their failure when supreme. He was, further, by no

means a young man, and had already served for two and a-half years in the country and taken part in numerous actions. All through the defence he displayed considerable want of initiative, allowing his forage-parties to be driven in every day, to the great detriment of his animal establishment and to the discontent of his officers.

February dragged on, with the news that Lord Ellenborough, the new Governor-General, had arrived, and that Pollock was at Peshawur, but gave no sign. On February 19 occurred the great earthquake. The earth rolled and heaved like the ocean, and the whole of the rebuilt walls and bastions were shattered completely, and, what was perhaps worse, a number of sheep killed. Nothing daunted, however, Broadfoot and his wonderful corps of fighting sappers set to work with the regimental working-parties to rebuild. Happily, the Afghans failed to seize their opportunity. As a matter of fact that failure was due to the extraordinary promptitude with which Broadfoot repaired the apparently appalling disaster to his works. The mud walls at which he had worked so hard lay in heaps! Probably by the next morning the more visible parts were standing again, complete in their front face, so that to the Afghan reconnoiters it appeared that they had never fallen. A miracle had happened! Providence seemed to be on the side of the unbelievers. That alone was enough to destroy the *élan* of the superstitious besiegers. In all Ningrahar and Lughman the walls of Jellalabad alone stood! Well might they say with the Jews on Holy Cross day:

' Thou art the Judge. We are bruised thus.
But, the Judgment over, join sides with us.'

It was after this loss of sheep that the 35th offered to give up their share of a fresh capture of sheep to the Europeans.

Towards the end of March it was believed that the Afghans were undermining the walls from the shelter of some of the old enclosures, and a sortie was made in which Broadfoot was severely wounded. All during March, Pollock was at Peshawur, heartening up and re-disciplining the demoralised sepoys of Wild's Brigade, of whom he found 1,800 in hospital. In vain did the garrison look for Pollock's arrival. With the best intention in the world he could not face the forcing of the Khyber till his European reinforcements came up. At last the garrison took matters into its own hands and sallied forth to attack Akhbar Khan. The immediate provocation was the firing of a salute by the latter in honour of a defeat of Pollock, said to have just occurred. The garrison, then and there, demanded to be led

against the enemy. It was sick of a passive defence, sick of rarely even being allowed to issue to seize the enemy's flocks which grazed almost within musket-shot of the defences. Sale, who resisted the demand for a sortie, finally gave way. The British emerged from their defences and drove the Afghans from various forts and enclosures, finally capturing Akhbar Khan's camp three miles distant from the town and recovering two of the guns lost by Elphinstone's column. Colonel Dennie, commanding the 13th, a stout old fighting man, was killed, and the 13th lost considerably. The garrison thus achieved its own immediate relief and had no difficulty in getting supplies. When, on April 16, Pollock's force arrived they found a free garrison waiting to receive them, with their bands playing 'Oh, but you've been long a-coming !' with a pretty irony.

From November to April, Sale's force had succeeded in keeping the flag flying, despite the croaking on the part of many that seems so inseparable from any of our ventures in the Afghan hills. Faraway on the south, Nott, at Kandahar, had been doing the same, but being away from the hampering control of Macnaghten and Elphinstone he had not felt the evil influence of their folly and their appalling end. It is now universally recognised that to George Broadfoot of all others did the garrison owe the fame that it achieved, though naturally all who had counselled capitulation were only too anxious to forget their share in opposing a policy that had stood them in such stead. Sale, of course, received full measure of praise, but it was not grudged to his subordinates, Broadfoot receiving a brevet and a C.B.

The story of the ' Illustrious Garrison ' is now told, and it is not necessary to follow Pollock in his avenging career, nor the rescue of the prisoners, nor to mourn the loss of Ghuzni, nor rejoice with stout old Nott at Kandahar.

There are many striking side-lights in the history of this war that are still of great interest. It is on record that the 44th Foot had been notorious for the contempt with which it had regarded its comrades, both officers and men, of the Company's Army, and indeed the natives of India generally. It was always on bad terms with its own native establishment, and it was pleased to call the native troops of the Company ' black regiments '—which was bad manners and extremely shortsighted. Now the 13th, as we have seen, was on very good terms with natives generally, and the Sepoy army in particular. Bitterly had the 44th reaped the crop it had sown, and cheerfully had the 13th's chickens come home to roost. The

same has been noticed often enough in Indian wars, the success that attended the operations of British and Sepoy units when *camaraderie* was rife, and the ill success when it has been conspicuous by its absence. At one time it was the fashion of certain corps to talk of 'black regiments.' The habit is dead, or almost dead. The intense good feeling that pervaded the relationship between the two troops in the Afghan war of 1878-80 killed it for good and all.

An interesting episode was the display at Ferozepore in 1838, where the army of the Indus met the Sikh army, and Lord Auckland, the then Governor-General, and Ranjeet Singh, reviewed their respective armies. From the officers' diaries that are extant we have references to the European freelances in the service of Ranjeet Singh. These varied from the Generals, such as Avitabile, Allard, and Ventura, to the lesser lights who commanded corps, the latter rather ragamuffin people dressed in the borrowed trappings of Europe. Avitabile, it may be remembered, was governor of Peshawur, just a governor after its own heart, who always had a corpse a-swinging on the open gallows outside the fort, and his own house to show all comers that he understood first principles. Among these gentlemen must be remembered Colonel Gardner, the famous *Gordana Sahib*, who, an American, came into India from Central Asia after an exciting period in the Khanates. He ended his life at Jammoo, where he had long been commandant of Ghulab Singh's and Ranbir Singh's artillery, and chief caster of cannon to the State of Kashmir. He could never eat or drink without clamping together the severed sinews of his throat, due to a sword slash, and in his old age always received visitors in a complete suit of the tartan of Cameron of Erracht, in which he was presented to our late King on his visit to Jammoo. His letters from 'Brahminy Bull' to 'John Bull,' at the time of the Mutiny, are models of shrewd comment.

Another interesting incident was the Institution of 'The Order of the Dourannie Empire,' an order of Knights and Companions with which Shah Shoojah inaugurated his re-ascent of the throne of his fathers, and with which many of the senior soldiers and all the political officers were decorated at Kabul, while the Army scoffed once again. When the Dourannie Empire proper perished by the sword two years later, the Government of India recalled the decoration from the recipients. Several of them, however, had passed to widows and heirs and are still extant. The badge of the order consisted of a gold Maltese cross with crossed swords between the ends of

the cross. The centre consisted of green and blue enamel surrounded by a circle of pearls and the Persian inscription 'Dur-i-Dauran,' 'Pearls of the Age,' in reference to the supposed derivation of Dourannie. Tancred's 'Historical Record of Medals' contains an engraving of the decoration.

The medals given for the defence of Jellalabad are distinct from those given for the rest of the campaign. The Governor-General issued a medal bearing a mural crown on one side and the inscription 'Jellalabad VII April' on the other. This, however, was disapproved of at Home, and in its place a second issued, having a head of the Queen on the *obverse* and the inscription 'Victoria Vindex,' and an effigy of Victory in the air on the *reverse*. Very few of the recipients returned theirs for exchange, preferring, apparently, the original one. The attribute 'Vindex' or 'Avenger' should be noticed as differing from the original *Regina*. This was common to all the medals for the second phase of the campaign after the Kabul massacres. These two medals, as were all the *Vindex* medals, were worn with a rainbow ribbon, designed by Lord Ellenborough, to represent the rising sun. The triumphal arches at the Ferozepore bridge of boats for Pollock's returning army were decorated with the same colours. This ribbon was revived for the bronze star that commemorated Lord Roberts' famous march from Kabul to Kandahar.

Such in brief is the story of Jellalabad and its 'Illustrious Garrison' which kept the flag flying at a time when it so sorely needed support. Alas! so many of its survivors were in due course to die a soldier's death. The two Sikh wars saw the deaths of many, and those who survived mostly fell in 1857. Gallant George Broadfoot fell at Ferozeshuhr while carrying a message for Lord Harding. Stout old Sir Robert Sale fell at Moodkee. Havelock and Henry Lawrence survived to save India and die at their posts. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

G. F. MACMUNN.

CARDINAL BEMBO AND HIS VILLA.

BY JULIA CARTWRIGHT.

PIETRO BEMBO was a typical Italian humanist. His whole life was governed by two ruling passions—the love of letters and of natural beauty. He was ambitious and greedy of gain, never tired of accumulating lucrative posts and rich benefices, but wealth and dignities in his eyes were only means to the end in view, steps in the ladder to the attainment of that blessed leisure which was the most desirable thing on earth. So he undertook hard and distasteful work, and toiled in law-courts and offices, that he might gain the power to be idle and to enjoy Nature and his beloved books in undisturbed peace. And since the only way in which a poor scholar could obtain independence and freedom from care was by entering the service of some noble patron, he went to the Court of Urbino with only forty ducats in his pocket, and, in spite of the remonstrances of his relatives and friends, remained there several years. 'Let them say what they choose,' he wrote to his brother at Venice, 'they are fools who think themselves wise and imagine that they can manage the lives of others better than their own. You need not be afraid that the charms of these ladies will make me forget myself. For I am not as great a fool as your Solomons would make out.'¹

The issue proved him to have been right. From Urbino he passed, after Duke Guidobaldo's death, to Rome, and through the influence of his friend Giuliano de Medici became secretary to Pope Leo X. But wherever he was, at Ferrara with Duchess Lucrezia, or at Urbino with Elisabetta Gonzaga and Emilia Pia, young Bembo was never so happy as when he could escape to the country for a few weeks. 'I write to Your Highness,' he says in a letter to Lucrezia from Ercole Strozzi's villa, 'sitting at an open window, looking out on the sweet and fresh landscape and commend myself to you as many times as there are leaves in the garden.'² In the Council hall at Venice, he confesses that he

¹ *Lettere*, ii. 17. The quotations from Bembo's *Letters* are taken from the edition published at Verona in 1552.

² *Ibid.* iv. 116.

sighed for a little shepherd's hut on the Apennine slopes, whence he could look down on the towers of Urbino ; and the letters of his adored Duchess came to him like a refreshing breeze from those dear hills. This passionate delight in country sights and sounds, in the song of the first nightingale and the coming of the swallow, in the daily wonder of sunrise and sunset, and the miracle of the spring, breaks out perpetually in his writings, alike in prose and poetry. His youthful work, ' *Gli Asolani*,' which he wrote at the Court of Caterina Cornaro, opens with a charming description of the palace garden on the heights of Asolo, with its vine-pergola and laurel groves, its close-clipped hedges and marble loggia looking out on the Lombard plains. In his Roman days, we know how keenly Messer Pietro enjoyed excursions into the Campagna, and how he rode out to Tivoli with Raphael and Count Baldassare and the Venetian patrician Andrea Navagero, to see all that was worth seeing, both new and old. And in the last years of his long life, it was still the aged Cardinal's greatest pleasure to take a walk outside the Porta del Popolo, under the wooded slopes of Monte Mario.

But the place which Bembo loved best in the world was his own villa, in the district of Cittadella near Padua—' *la mia dilettevola villetta nel Padovano*,' as he calls it repeatedly in his correspondence. This was a country house in the parish of Santa Maria di Non, not far from Castelfranco and Asolo, which took its name of Villa Bozza from a former owner, a valiant soldier of fortune, known as Bozza da Nona. It stood in the midst of pleasant gardens and meadows, watered by the river Brenta and its tributary, the Picvego, a small stream that flowed under the villa windows. About 1475 this small property was bought by Pietro's father, Bernardo Bembo, a noble Venetian who held high office under the Republic. He was successively Ambassador at Florence—where his son Pietro was born in 1470—and at Ferrara, but is chiefly remembered by the tomb which he raised to Dante's memory while he was Podestà of Ravenna. Whenever Messer Bernardo could spare a few weeks from his official duties, he took refuge with his wife and children at Villa Bozza, and there Pietro spent the happiest days of his boyhood. In his Latin Dialogue ' *Etna*,' a record of a journey which he paid to Sicily to study Greek under Lascaris, the scene is laid at the Villa. We have a charming picture of the two scholars, father and son, sitting in the cool shelter of the atrium inside the house, on a hot August day, discussing the eruption of the volcano

and all the wonderful things which the young man had seen in Sicily. Presently the burning heat of the sun compels them to retire into the library, where they sit at ease and turn over the pages of their favourite tomes, until the sun sinks in the western sky and they stroll out into the woods by the river, listening to the pleasant murmur of running water. 'Thus, with always new delight, we return to our beloved Nonianum.'

In June 1519 Bernardo died suddenly, and his son was summoned to Venice, to find himself face to face with a critical state of affairs. His father had left heavy debts and three orphan grandchildren, the children of his daughter Antonia, for whom he had to provide; while, to add to his difficulties, a dishonest factor of an estate which he held under the Knights of St. John at Bologna, had absconded with 600 florins. Such were the straits to which he was reduced that he feared he must sell his beloved Villa. 'My father's death,' he wrote to his old friend, Cardinal Bibbiena, 'has involved me in such financial difficulties that I hardly know which way to turn. And yet, if possible, I would preserve that delightful Villetta, of which I have so often told you—I mean my dear Noniano.'¹

Fortunately this catastrophe was averted and Bembo managed to raise a dowry of 3,000 florins for his eldest niece, Marcella, whom he married to his kinsman, Gian Matteo Bembo, an able young official, 'not rich, but sufficiently well-to-do and highly esteemed in the city.' Marcella's sisters went back to their convent, to remain there until a dowry could be provided for them, and Bembo returned to Rome, groaning in spirit over his hard fate. The high hopes which he had entertained on Leo's accession had been disappointed, the Cardinal's hat, which at one time dangled before his eyes, had vanished into space, and he found himself involved in vexatious lawsuits with rivals who disputed his right to the benefices which he already held. He was thoroughly sick of Rome, and hated the sight of a pen. At length, in June 1521, he obtained leave of absence on the score of ill health, and left the Eternal City, with the fixed resolve never to return there.

'God knows,' he wrote from the Villa to his old Urbino friend, Archbishop Fregoso, 'that I left Rome and Pope Leo, on pretence of taking a short holiday for the good of my health, but with the firm resolution never to return and to spend what little is left me

¹ *Lettere*, i. 46.

of life, for my own enjoyment, not for that of others. I am settled in Padua, a beautiful city with a temperate climate, quiet and convenient and singularly well adapted for the pursuit of letters. I spend part of my time in town, and part in this Villa, free from all cares, or, if my slender resources entail some burdens that I cannot lay down, these are comparatively light and do not hinder my studies. I would have taken this step long ago if it had been possible, and should not have wasted ten of the best years of my life which have been thrown away, excepting so far as they have procured me a little fortune and freedom.'¹

During the next ten years, most of Bembo's life was spent at his beloved Villa. In 1527 he succeeded in buying a fine *palazzo* in the parish of St. Bartolommeo in Padua, close to the great church of the Santo, where he housed his priceless treasures of art, the paintings by Raphael and Bellini, by Mantegna and Memling, the bronzes and marbles, the gems and rare manuscripts, which he had collected. But although he adorned this town house with a lovely garden and terraces of orange and lemon trees, and planted a grove where his favourite nightingales made their nests, he always escaped to the Villa in the early spring and lingered there until, on All Saints' Day, the University term opened with High Mass in the Cathedral.

His life there was brightened by the companionship of Morosina, the beautiful young girl who had lived with him in Rome, and who, until her death in 1535, was the cherished partner of his home and the mother of his children, although he never made her his wife. Bembo, as he sometimes found it necessary to remind his correspondents, was not a priest. Like many of his contemporaries, he had only taken minor orders to enable him to hold ecclesiastical benefices, and in this age of lax morals the irregularity of the connection gave no cause for scandal. The guests who came and went at the Villa, the friends who shared Bembo's intimacy, treated her exactly as if she had been his legal wife. Rodolfo Pio of Carpi, the young Protonotary De Rossi, Trifone Gabriele, and Molza talked and laughed with her and sent her friendly messages in their letters. Even ecclesiastics as saintly as Sadoleto and Contarini were not deterred by her presence from visiting the Villa, while the members of Bembo's own family, Gian Matteo and Marcella, showed her the liveliest affection.

Two years after they settled at Padua, Morosina gave birth

¹ *Lettere*, i. 118.

to a boy, Lucilio, who became the apple of his father's eye. In May 1525 a second boy named Torquato was born, and three years later a girl, who received the classical name of Elena. The happiness of his domestic circle satisfied the cravings of Bembo's sensitive nature and filled a void in his life. Another inmate of the Villa was Colà Bruno—the *fidus Achates* who followed Bembo from Messina and never left him until his death in 1542. Messer Colà was indispensable to Bembo, alike as secretary and literary adviser, as steward and man of business. He wrote his letters, revised his verses, sold his crops and wine, superintended the publication of his works at Venice, and travelled all over Italy to collect his rents and defend his rights. Morosina and her children, Marcella and her husband, were equally devoted to Colà, and by the will which Bembo made in 1536 he appointed this loyal servant to be the guardian of his children, with the strict injunction never to leave their side, or allow anyone else to interfere with them. Perhaps a still greater mark of confidence was the fact that he left Colà all his writings in prose or verse to be published or not, at his discretion.

Nor was Bembo unmindful of the peasants who lived on his small estate—his little family, as he calls them in his letters. He took a fatherly interest in their concerns, protected them from the injustice of rapacious officials, nursed them when they were sick, and wept for them when they died. Many were the appeals which he addressed to the Podestà of Cittadella on behalf of these innocent *contadini*, whose wrongs he regarded as injuries to himself. One day he insisted on the release of a poor lad who had been arrested for bearing a sword, as if, in those troubled times, a weapon were not needed for self-defence. Another time he demanded the restoration of an old servant's effects, which a kinsman in Ferrara had detained unjustly. 'I beg you,' he wrote to Duke Alfonso's secretary, 'send for the scoundrel and give him a good scolding, which he richly deserves. And if you can recover these things, which are worth little in themselves, but are precious to our poor old Anna, I shall be as much obliged as if they were Countess Matilda's dowry.'¹ When, on the Feast of the Virgin, a dance was given at the Villa, Bembo would write to his nephew Gian Matteo in Venice, begging him to send a few trifles such as women like, as prizes on this occasion—a mirror and a pair of combs, worth about two and a-half *lire* each, and a coloured waistband, together with six *lire* of pretty pink and white sugared confetti. The death of his

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 115.

old gardener, Piero Antonio, was a real sorrow. 'This year,' he wrote to his friend Flavio Crisolin, the Papal Secretary, 'I have lost my Piero Antonio, and although he was only a servant, his death has grieved me more than you would have thought possible. But he was good and faithful, and had been constant in all the changes of fortune which have befallen me during the last twenty-five years. I cannot and will not forget him.'¹

From his quiet retreat, Bembo kept up an active correspondence with his old friends and colleagues, and watched the critical events that were taking place in Rome. He received the news of the sudden death of his patron, Leo X., without any pretence at excessive sorrow, and lamented the accession of Pope Adrian IV., whose Papacy was, in his eyes, more hurtful than any vacancy. 'Cursed,' he cried, 'a thousand times cursed, be the blind goddess Fortune, for her deplorable lack of judgment!' And in common with all the friends of Art and Letters, he rejoiced at the accession of a Medici Pope in the person of Clement VII. Bembo lost no time in going to kiss the new Pope's feet, and in November 1524 he arrived in Rome, bringing with him the MS. of his 'Prose' as an offering. Clement received him graciously and promised him a Canonry of Padua, but not even the company of Sadoletto and Ghiberti could make him forget the Villa. 'I am longing for home,' he wrote to Rodolfo Pio, 'and as soon as this Jubilee is over, I shall return far more willingly than I came here.' Again in a letter to Trifone he says, 'I count the days till I get back to you and my other friends, to our sweet and tranquil life, and my delicious Villetta.' A sharp attack of fever, however, delayed his return, and it was not till April that he finally left Rome. From Pesaro he wrote to the Duchess of Urbino, expressing his disappointment at missing her, and telling her that his visit to Rome had nearly cost him his life. 'Now, however,' he adds, 'I am well again, and on the way to my blessed Villetta, from which Rome shall never tear me again.'²

A few days after his return he addressed the following letter to his old colleague, Agostino Foglietta, giving a graphic account of life at the Villa, and of the contrast which its peaceful delights offered to the turmoil of Rome :

'As you saw, I mounted my horse, still suffering from the illness which Rome unkindly gave me, in reward for my trouble in coming to see her. But, as I rode, my strength returned at every step, and

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 120.

² *Ibid.* ii. 32, iii. 88, iv. 41.

by the time I arrived here, I was myself again. Whether this was due to the pleasure I felt in leaving Rome, which certainly treated me badly this time, or to the change of air, or to healthy exercise, I will not attempt to decide, probably it was the result of all three! At Padua I paid visits to some of my friends, and received visits from others, and then came on to my Villetta, which received me with open arms and where I find a peace and content that are a great contrast to the troubles which beset me in Rome. I do not hear disagreeable news. I need not think of lawsuits or wait on Procurators, or visit Auditors of the Rota. I hear nothing but the voices of nightingales warbling from every bush in joyous rivalry, and the songs of other birds, who all do their best to please me with their divine harmonies. I read, I write; when I choose, I ride or walk, I spend much of my time in a grove at the end of a pleasant and fruitful garden, where I gather vegetables for the first course of our evening meal, and sometimes pick a basket of strawberries, which are not only delicious to the taste, but perfume the whole breakfast-table with their fragrance. Nor should I forget to tell you that all day the garden and house, and the whole place, are full of roses. And that nothing should be lacking to my enjoyment, I spend the evening, when it is pleasanter to be on the water than on land, in a small boat. First I row along a clear stream that flows past the house and then on the Brenta, which this brook joins, and which here is a swift and joyous river, and waters our meadows on the other side. In this fashion I mean to spend the whole summer and autumn, only going to Padua now and then for a few days to see my friends, and make my Villa seem the more charming compared with the city.'¹

So the days slipped away, and by August, Bembo felt himself once more 'a simple peasant of the soil.' With his own hands he not only picked strawberries and roses, but dug the ground and planted trees and shrubs. Papal Secretaries who paid him a visit were pressed into the service, and became as keenly interested in the garden as its owner.

'To-morrow,' wrote Bembo one October to Flavio Crisolino, 'I shall return home, to plant new trees in the little grove which has lost several oaks and chestnuts, owing to the intense heat of the past summer. Your ivy has already covered a fine large pavilion at the other end of the garden, and I have made another little pergola with ivy and larch-poles firmly fixed in the ground at regular intervals, which in two or three years' time ought to be very beautiful. So you see that your work has produced excellent

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 73.

results. I rejoice to hear that you often think of my Villetta and of the happy life we lead there, although I can hardly believe that your important affairs leave you time to think of my small fortunes. But I do not repent my choice, and am more content every day and, thank God, both well and merry.'¹

The great reputation which Bembo had acquired as a poet and scholar, his vast knowledge of classical literature and the mastery with which he wrote both in Latin and in the *lingua volgare*, attracted all the men of letters who came to study at Padua. One summer day the venerable Professor Leonico rode out to the Villa with a distinguished company, which included young Ermes Stampa, the Duke of Milan's intimate friend, and Reginald Pole—‘Monsignore d'Inghilterra’ as he was called—who, besides being near of kin to the King of England, was said to be the most virtuous and learned youth at the University. These illustrious guests spent an enjoyable afternoon studying Bembo's priceless Codices and discussing the latest poems of Petrarch which he had discovered, and lingered on the pleasant lawn among the roses and honeysuckle, until the last glow of the setting sun had died away. This was a red-letter day in Bembo's calendar.

There were others, too, which lived long in his memory. One morning, news reached the Villa that Gaspare Contarini was coming to Padua on his way to Rome; so Bembo hastened to send horses for the Ambassador's use, and placed both his houses at the disposal of this august visitor. Another day his dear friend Trifone would come over from Ronchi with Vettore Soranzo, the young Papal Chamberlain, bringing their latest sonnets and canzoni for Messer Pietro's approval. Or else Luigi da Porto, the gallant young soldier who wrote the story of Romeo and Juliet, and who could handle the sword as skilfully as the pen, would ride over with his brother Bernardino from their Villa in the Berici hills, to read Bembo his latest romances. Sometimes Bembo and Colà would take horses and ride through the fair Trevigiana to visit M. Luigi Priuli in his fine house at Treville, or seek out Messer Alvise Cornaro in his Villa at Este in the green Euganean hills, and see the splendid gardens which Giangiorgio Trissino was laying out round his new country-house at Cricoli. All these places were within easy reach of Villa Bozza, and presents of choice fruit and early vegetables often passed between their different owners. Messer Luigi da Porto would send Bembo a basket of superb strawberries, or a

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 120

brace of quails and a young kid. Another time a swift retriever for his use out hunting, or a bundle of fine asparagus, would arrive from Vicenza. 'Commend me to our dear Marc Antonio Silvestri and his fine garden,' wrote Bembo to the poet Cappello, 'and beg him to send me some roots of his excellent artichokes.'

Bembo's love of good things was well known to his friends, and all manner of delicacies found their way to the Villa. Constanza Fregoso, the wife of Count Landi of Piacenza, whose son came to study at Padua and lodged in Bembo's house, sent her old friend cheeses and salted tongues, or cases of lemons from the shores of the Lago di Garda; while boxes of sweetmeats, preserved citrons, and pink sugar confetti came from the General of the Augustinians at Venice. Bembo's own gifts of strawberries or flowers to his friends at Padua were generally accompanied with a sonnet or a canzone—'a few rhymes which saw the light this summer in the idleness of this *dolce Noniano*, and were born so lately that the ink on the page is hardly yet dry.' 'You are too courteous, my dear Rambusio,' he exclaimed, when a richly bound copy of the donor's 'Gallia' arrived, together with a fine young tree and a jar of olives from the Venetian historian.

From all parts of Italy, scholars and poets sent their masterpieces to receive the benefit of Bembo's advice and criticism. Sannazzaro sent his 'De Partu Virginis' from Naples, Castiglione wrote from Toledo to beg that Bembo would revise the proof of his 'Cortegiano,' Ariosto brought the new edition of his 'Orlando' to lay before him. Trifone and Navagero, Molza and Tebaldeo, Bernardo Tasso of Ferrara, and the Veronese poet Fracostoro, Vittoria Colonna and Veronica Gambara, all consulted 'this oracle of Apollo' regarding their productions, while countless other poets whose names are forgotten followed their example and sought the advice of this one man whose authority was supreme in literary matters.

Meanwhile Bembo's own studies were not neglected. 'Here I am,' he wrote to a Roman prelate, a few weeks after his return to the Villa in 1525, 'busy once more with my old friends, the books, whose good graces, I flatter myself, I have recovered. They had good reason to be vexed with me, as I had not looked at them during the whole winter, although, God knows, this was not my fault.' A few years later he wrote to his old secretary Avila, 'I read and write more now than I have ever done before.'¹ Much

¹ *Lettere*, ii. vi. 15, ii. 200.

of his leisure was devoted to the annotation of his old favourites, Petrarch and Dante, and to the collation of classical texts, but he found time to study Provençal poetry and Spanish literature, and even wrote verses in Spanish to please Duchess Lucrezia. During these years he revised most of his earlier works for publication. 'Gli Asolani,' the Latin dialogues 'Etna,' 'De ducibus' and the 'Prose' were all printed at the Aldine Press in 1530, as well as the volume of 'Rime,' of which no fewer than thirty editions were published before the close of the century.

So happy and content amid these varied occupations was the great scholar, that he never stirred from home, and did not even go to Venice for two years. But in May 1527 the peace of the Villa was rudely disturbed by the news of the terrible disaster which had befallen Rome—the capture and sack of the city by the Imperialist armies. Like all who had known the Eternal City in the golden days of Leo, Bembo was filled with consternation. In his letters to Sadolet at Carpentras, he poured out the anguish of his soul, and mourned over the ruin which had overtaken his dearest friends. Foglietta was killed by a chance shot, Ghiberti, the Papal Datary, was dragged from prison to prison by Spanish soldiers, Angelo Colocci's priceless collections were plundered before his eyes, Negri lost his library and Paolo Giovio the manuscript of his history. Tebaldeo, the beloved friend of Bembo and Raphael, was given up for lost, and was only saved by taking refuge in Palazzo Colonna. In his joy at hearing of his friend's safety, Bembo sent Tebaldeo a present of thirty ducats to relieve his most pressing needs, and begged him to come to Padua or Venice, assuring him of the most friendly reception from his many admirers. 'Come here to those who love you and await you,' he wrote, 'and leave this miserable corpse of our once beautiful Rome.'¹

But by this time all Italy was overrun by foreign invaders. A squadron of German and Spanish troops ravaged Bembo's *Commenda* at Bologna, cutting down fruit-trees and vines for fuel, and burning the houses of the unhappy peasants. Even the Villa was not safe from alarms. In his terror at the approach of these savage hordes, Bembo prepared to remove his family to Venice in the spring of 1528, and begged Ramusio for the use of his father-in-law Navagero's house, the Ambassador being in France at the time. 'Would to God,' he exclaimed, 'that these vile Germans had stayed by their own stoves, instead of coming here to vex us.' Fortunately the

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 157.

Landsknechten took another road, and this cloud which darkened the horizon drifted away to the north. 'I hear,' he wrote to Soranzo, 'that these cursed Germans are marching on Peschiera, and we shall be rid of them by to-morrow. So Messer Trifone may stay quietly at Ronchi, and I need not load my barge for Venice.' Then he adds the following characteristic message: 'Tell my Aunt, Madonna Cecilia, that for the last four days, a most delicious nightingale has been singing in my garden, filling my soul with rapture all day long, and the closer I stand and watch him, the better he sings. I know that if she were here, she would envy me, and I hope she will come to my house the more willingly, to hear this enchanting little bird.'¹

The following year was saddened by the death of several of Bembo's most intimate friends. Castiglione, his old comrade at the Court of Urbino, died in Spain, broken-hearted by the sack of Rome; and he lost both his neighbour Luigi da Porto, and the beloved Navagero, who died of fever at Blois. 'He was too excellent a man for these cruel and miserable times,' wrote Bembo. 'Cursed, oh! thrice cursed be the evil fate which has robbed me of the men I loved best. But my pen refuses to do her part, and I had rather weep than write.'

He remained at the Villa all through the spring and summer, and found his best comfort in the sweet scents of the garden and the countless nightingales which soothed his wounded spirits with their delicious song.

' Yet are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake,
For Death, he taketh all away, but these he cannot take.'

At Christmas Bembo went to Bologna to meet the Pope, and to see the Emperor, who came, it was fondly hoped, to restore peace to Italy and receive the Imperial Crown. Many of his old friends were there to welcome him—Isabella d'Este, her brother Alfonso, the Duke and Duchess of Urbino; and every day a brilliant company of scholars and poets met at the house of Veronica Gambara. But not all these splendours could keep Bembo away from his Villa in the springtime, and by March he was at home again with Morosina and her children.

' I am back at my Villa,' he wrote to Soranzo, ' and have already spent three days here with singular pleasure, owing to the extraordinary beauty of the season. No one ever remembers so fine

¹ *Letters*, ii. 183.

a March ! Not only are the roads dry, the skies blue and the air as balmy as in summer—all three things that are very unusual at this time of year—but the trees are green and full of leaf, and their foliage already affords us shade from the heat of the sun, which has not yet climbed far towards the north. Yesterday, which was the Feast of Our Lady, I picked some quite large almonds and several ripe strawberries, which is more singular as none have yet arrived in the city from Arquà, where, as you know, fruit ripens earlier than in any of these parts. What is still more remarkable, the vines in this district have put forth not only eyes, but young tendrils, before the pruning-knife has touched them. The swallows have been here some days and the turtle, cuckoo, and nightingale have all been heard. If, as I hear, the Papal Court is on the way to Rome, you will have summer weather at Easter, which I for one do not envy you.'¹

The wonderful beauty of the season, as Bembo told the Pope in another letter, made him less inclined to envy the gentle citizens of Padua, whom he saw returning from the Coronation festivities with faces flushed and tired by their exertions to secure a good place at the pageant. But these halcyon days at the Villa were already numbered. On the death of Navagero, Ramusio informed Bembo that he had been proposed as his successor in the important office of historiographer to the Republic. At first he shrank from undertaking so arduous a task, and pleaded his advancing years and ignorance of history in support of his reluctance. But his objections were overruled, and in June 1530 he was appointed to succeed Messer Andrea, both as historian to the State and Keeper of the Nicene Library, for which latter office his vast knowledge of manuscripts fitted him especially. 'God forgive you, my son, Gian Matteo, and my brother, Messer Giovanni Battista, for interrupting the sweet repose of this delicious life and the studies that are dearer to me than any dignities and grandeur. It is your doing I am persuaded, and I know that your motive has been an excellent one. But once I put out to sea again and take up this burden, I shall never live as peacefully as of old. . . . And believe me, it is no light task to write history—with any credit to oneself.'²

During the next eight years Bembo discharged the duties of his double office with conscientious assiduity. His house in Venice became the meeting-place of the most famous scholars, and his writings attained a world-wide celebrity. Erasmus celebrated his praises as the brightest ornament of the age, and in his dreams

¹ *Lettere*, ii. 200.

² *Ibid.* ii. 214.

Aretino saw him throned on the heights of Parnassus and crowned by celestial spirits with a diadem of light. But henceforth his visits to the Villa were few and far between. Morosina and her children still spent the summer there, and Bembo joined them whenever he could snatch a few days from his official duties. 'To-day I am at the Villa, and seem to be alive again,' he wrote one August to Gian Matteo at Venice. 'Here it is fresh and beautiful, and altogether delightful. I mean to stay here for a few days, and wish that you could leave your desk and come here with your boy Luigi.'

But all too soon, sorrows came to darken this happy home. Bembo's promising boy, Lucilio, died there one summer day in 1532, after a few hours' illness. 'I have lost my Lucilio,' the stricken father wrote to his old friend Avila, 'my sweet and charming boy, on whom, as you know, all the hopes of my house were set. I cannot tell you what grief this unexpected event has caused me. . . . So in one moment all our hopes and dreams are shattered.' And in answer to Veronica Gambara's letter of sympathy he wrote: 'Certainly I have lost a little son, who more than fulfilled every hope I had formed of his future although he was not yet nine years of age. But I try not to murmur at the Will of God, and since my flower was doomed to die so soon, at least I thank Heaven that he was all I could most desire.'¹

Morosina never recovered from the shock of her child's death. Three years later she followed him to the grave, and was buried under a stately tomb in the church of S. Bartolommeo. Bembo was inconsolable for her loss.

'What shall I say, my dearest Trifone,' he wrote to his old and valued friend, 'in answer to your letter on the death of my loved Morosina? Before it reached me, I had turned for comfort to the Ancients, and tried to read the consoling words which they used at such moments. But this does me little good, for no sooner do I lay down the book, than I remember she is gone, and that I have lost the sweetest soul that ever lived. She loved me far more than herself and was altogether satisfied with my love, despising the gifts and ornaments of jewels and fine clothes which please other women. And this blessed soul was clad in the fairest form, and had the loveliest face that has ever been seen in these lands, or, perhaps, in the present time. It is true, as you say, that I ought to thank God who gave her to me for all these years. I try to do this, but it is impossible in one moment to lay aside the affections which

¹ *Lettere*, iii. 212, iv. 27.

are part of our being, and must remain with us as long as we live. I know how true your sorrow is, and realise how much you loved this fair and noble woman, and how deeply she on her part loved and honoured you. Farewell.'¹

How deeply Bembo felt this bereavement we learn from the touching letter which he wrote to Ramusio, when he in his turn lost his wife a few months later. 'On returning last night from Praglia, where I had ridden for exercise and change of scene, I found the sad news of the death of your dear wife, Madonna Franceschina, awaiting me. I feel for you as a fond brother, who knows by experience how hard these partings are to bear. For when we are already old and want these sweet and faithful companions more than ever, it is a bitter and cruel thing to be deprived of them.'²

The two children whom Morosina had left him were henceforth the object of Bembo's tenderest care—the boy Torquato and the little Elena, who grew up so like her mother that the sight of her lovely face often brought tears to his eyes. They still spent the summer at the Villa, in Colà's charge, and when, in 1539, Bembo received the long-coveted Cardinal's hat from Paul III., he came there to spend his last few days with them. The sight of these familiar places recalled the past vividly; he wrote his beautiful elegy on the death of Morosina and sent it to his intimate friend Elisabetta Quirini at Venice, begging her to let no one see the verses, or hear that they had been composed after his election. Then the new Cardinal went on to Rome, and in spite of the load of seventy years that weighed heavily on his shoulders, took up these new duties with his wonted ardour. 'I am well,' he wrote on Christmas Eve to Venice. 'This air is milder than ours and suits me better. I am about to be ordained and shall learn to say Mass to-morrow. You see how great a change God has wrought in me.'³

But amid all the glamour of Rome and the manifold interests of this new life, Bembo never forgot Villa Bozza. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to hear from the newly arrived Venetian Ambassador the latest tidings of Torquato and Elena, and above all of the garden. He insisted on hearing every detail of the children's life and charged Colà to provide the best tutors for them both, saying that money spent on education was always well spent. Unfortunately, Torquato was an incorrigible idler who hated the

¹ *Lettere*, ii. 37.

² *Ibid.* ii. 103.

³ *Ibid.* v. 225.

sight of a book, while Elena displayed an independent spirit that tried the patience of the nuns in whose convent she had been placed. 'I regret to hear,' wrote her father, 'that you have become proud and obstinate, and refuse to obey your teachers. This has vexed me greatly, because girls of this kind grow up so disagreeable that everyone dislikes them, most of all their husbands and parents.' Worse than all, Elena begged to be allowed to learn to play the clavichord, a request which the Cardinal sternly refused, saying that this was a vain and frivolous pursuit, unworthy of a modest and honourable lady. 'Besides which,' he adds, 'you will never play well, unless you devote ten or twelve years to this exercise, which you know would be impossible. And if you play badly, your music will bring you little pleasure and much disgrace. So give up this foolish desire, and tell your companions that you are not going to learn the clavichord for them to laugh at you.'¹

On his seventy-first birthday—May 20, 1541—Bembo wrote to Colà, thanking him for all his loving care of the children, and rejoicing to hear that Elena was writing Latin verses and learning grammar, and that Torquato showed some taste for antiques, the sure sign of a gentle nature. 'This month he enters his seventeenth year, and is no longer a child, but a man. Elena, too, will be thirteen on the last day of June. Tell me if she is growing up as tall and beautiful as she promised to be. For certainly there is nothing dearer in the world to me, or that I love half as well as I do this child.' That summer was spent by Torquato and Elena with Colà at the Villa, where they were as merry as crickets. 'I am glad,' wrote the Cardinal, 'to hear that you are staying longer than usual at my Villetta, especially for Elena's sake, for this is one of the two seasons of the year when it is looking its best. I envy you not a little. But keep well and enjoy yourselves.'²

It was the last summer which this joyous party were to spend at Villa Bozza. For Colà—good, faithful Colà—fell suddenly ill that winter and died. Elena begged in vain to be allowed to go to the Villa as usual with her brother in August, but was told that at her age this was impossible, and that she must stay in the convent until the time came for her to leave it for good.

The Cardinal was already looking out for a suitable match for his daughter, and in the summer of 1543 he obtained the Pope's leave to go to Venice, that he might arrange a marriage 'for the child whom my human frailty gave me.' In July, Elena was

¹ *Lettere*, iv. 105, 107.

Ibid. iii. 374-6.

married at Padua, in her father's presence, to Pietro Gradenigo, a young Venetian 'of good family and excellent appearance.' The Cardinal paid a last visit to the Villa, which he had not seen for many years, and returned to his new diocese at Gubbio, not without a sigh for the old days when he was a free man and could live where he chose. After the birth of Elena's son in 1544, she and her husband went to Villa Bozza for the autumn, leaving the little Paolino, by her father's orders, with her cousins. Bembo took the keenest interest in his grandson, and gave Elena minute directions as to his clothes and food, begging her above all to see that the boy was not allowed to walk too early. Unfortunately the marriage had not proved altogether happy. The Cardinal was sorely disturbed to hear of his son-in-law's indiscretions, and could only recommend the young wife to be patient and gentle herself, while he begged Marcella to be kind to '*la poverina*.' At his request, however, Elisabetta Quirini spoke seriously to Pietro on the subject, and did this with so much tact that the young man actually listened to her advice. After the birth of a second child, in August 1546, the young couple again spent the autumn at the Villa, to Elena's delight and her father's great satisfaction.

'I am thankful,' he wrote to Gian Matteo in October, 'to hear what you say of my son-in-law, and especially to know that he and his wife are happy together. You may imagine how much I envy them for being at the Villa for the vintage, but as long as they are enjoying themselves, I shall be quite content.' And to Pietro he wrote: 'I can see you and Elena to-day at the Villa, enjoying this sweet and delicious time of year, and must own that I feel very envious.'¹ The thought of his darling child spending these sunny autumn days under the grape-laden vines, on the banks of the swift-flowing Brenta, revived old memories, and made him long to see the place again. He wrote to Elena, telling her how much he hoped to come to Padua another year, and spend the summer with them at his beloved Villetta. But a few days after this he had a fall, from the effects of which he never recovered. Three months later—on January 30, 1547—the great Cardinal died in Rome, and never saw Elena or the Villa again.

¹ *Lettere*, iv. 105, 107.

BY THE WAYSIDE.

I.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

THE most amazing thing about Shakespeare is that, in spite of his wonderful imagination, he was able to make a practical success of life. Half his powers would have floated any other man beyond the region of reality and stranded him in the clouds. But Shakespeare never lost his sense of the real, and Stratford was the place by which he clung to earth. Through all the adventures of his London years the memory of home remained an active influence in his life. Passions might surge round it, the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces of his own creation envelop it, Hamlet, Lear, and Othello dwarf it into momentary insignificance ; but it was always there, working like a leaven, restraining, urging, suggesting unromantic but realisable ideals ; New Place with the Clopton pew, the great tithes and the rights attached to them, the local pre-eminence which prejudice might have refused to an actor but which nobody would contest in the owner of the big house—the sane ambition of a wise and tolerant man who asked no more from his own generation than it was capable of giving, and who could walk as firmly on the beaten tracks of the world as along the untrodden ways of fancy.

The Avon valley changes slowly ; it marches with the times, but at its own pace ; and, while adopting what pleases it from the new world, it keeps in touch with the old. Warwick, Evesham, and Tewkesbury stand like sentinels guarding the past ; Charlote and 'haunted Hilborough,' ancient manors, priories, bridges, and tithe-barns link up the centuries. It is the most English part of England : a pleasant, undulating, restful country, where the hours move slowly on the dials of the church clocks and continuity is more apparent than change. It is true that the Forest of Arden has disappeared. Banished dukes must seek a refuge elsewhere, and Bottom and his fellows rehearse their 'tedious brief scene' in other glades. But the river still flows through copse and meadow and orchard, washing the roots of slanting willows on which Ophelia hung her garlands, and of antique trees where Jaques 'moralised' the stag ; and there are bushes which a truant schoolboy might stil

mistake for bears, as he hurries homeward at nightfall, eager to be past the churchway paths before the ghosts begin to glide.

The town itself, composite as it is and marred by the hideous memorial, is not unworthy of its past greatness. At first, one feels inclined to curse the clerical vandal who pulled down New Place to avoid a rate. But perhaps it is better so. Brick and mortar and well-informed custodians can distract as well as instruct ; and it is good to be able to stand alone and look up at the stars on the spot where 'The Tempest,' certainly, was written, and the magic voice passed into silence.

The birthplace is over-full of glass cases and disturbing trifles, but the street with the Guild Chapel, Grammar School, and Alms-houses is entirely satisfactory ; especially on a winter evening when there is snow on the roofs, and patches of yellow light fall on to the frozen road through casement windows. It is easy then to step back into the past, to pierce through the timbered walls into the privacy of some Elizabethan home, and see the wood fire blazing on the hearth, the oldest aunt telling the saddest tale, the veteran stripping his sleeve to show his scars, while the children watch the faces that glow and fade amongst the embers, and whisper about the fairies.

One would like to have Stratford all to oneself, to wander alone among silent streets and peep into empty houses, re-peopling them with the figures that should be there and are not—the Hathaways of Shotover, still a little suspicious, but outwardly respectful since their kinswoman became mistress of New Place ; and the Halls, the Harts, and the Quineys. Dogberry, too, should be strutting about in the more splendid of his two gowns, and Davy would have ridden into market with William Cook, on business from Mr. Justice Shallow.

And yet there is something appropriate in the continuous pageant of new faces ; Americans painfully anxious to say the right thing, but to say it in some original and striking way ; Germans, surprised and a little annoyed to find that England claims her own poet as English ; Baconians, eternally hopeful of finding the cryptic thumb-mark of their master somewhere on the walls ; bicyclists, motorists, morris-dancers, men, women, and children, all the motley cosmopolitan crowd that pours through Stratford every day and filters into the church. Shakespeare would have understood and enjoyed them all. If the bust on the chancel wall were not so wooden and lifeless, you would suspect it of crying a hundred times a day, 'My

tables ! meet it is I set it down ' ; and, surely, even the bust must smile when some good soul spells out, in tones of religious awe, the lines, aimed, not without a chuckle, at an unscrupulous but superstitious sexton,

' Bleste be ye man yt. spares thes stones,
And cvrst be he yt. moves my bones.'

II.

' NOSES AND THEY SMELL NOT.'

Assuredly, none of the five senses is so reminiscent as the sense of smell. It is the body-servant of recollection, the purveyor-in-chief of memories. Violets, the dawn, autumn woods, half the sentiment that derives from the changing seasons, speak to the heart more pregnantly through the nose than through sight or hearing. Who does not know the peculiar emotion excited by the scent of hay on a summer morning—the faint whiff that is borne from the distant fields into the streets of a provincial town ? All the pathos of the past is in it, all the glow of the present. The thrush is not more moving, the first primrose has no gladder message. And, for awaking these complex memories, the nose is the best member that we have. Pinched by the cold, tickled by the blankets, the butt of cariaturists and neglected by the poets, the nose has many things to suffer. Let us give it its due ; this, the least romantic of the features, has been the sole begetter of many sonnets.

But, at the same time, no other sense is so erratic ; its close connection with memory renders it peculiarly fallible. It lacks independence and forms its opinions at second-hand. Scents are seldom, if ever, judged on their own merits. The distinction between a pleasing scent and a bad smell is an arbitrary distinction and depends on association. The odour of a rocky shore at low tide, disgusting when it is connected with the drains, becomes positively agreeable when it is found to emanate from seaweed. For the nose is a great respecter of persons, a creature of prejudice and ingrained habit. It judges like a court-martial, and welcomes or condemns according as the odour at the bar is recognised to be an adjunct of a pleasant or an unpleasant object. Aqueous vapour and carbonic acid gas are not in themselves calculated to stir strong emotions ; yet poets have written moving lines about their lady's

breath. Dog lovers have been known to fly from the monkey-house at the Zoo, and yet to sit unmoved at home in the pestilential atmosphere of their long-haired pets. Tarmac and petrol are still an abomination to many of us, but to our grandchildren they will probably be eloquent of childhood and summers that are no more, and will be inhaled with poignant rapture.

I was walking one April morning with a friend along an Umbrian valley. The air was sweet with blossom, and, as we went, we amused ourselves by trying to put a label on each scent that was wafted to us. No difficulty arose till we struck a patch more subtle, though not less reminiscent, than the others.

‘ Beans,’ I suggested—‘ delicious ! ’

‘ Delicious,’ echoed my companion ; ‘ but not beans. Pear ? ’

‘ Hm,’ I replied ; ‘ I don’t think so. I know it as well as I know my own name ; only, somehow, I can’t fix it. Anyhow, delicious ! ’

And we walked on in silence, inhaling with full lungs.

Suddenly, the whitish-grey appearance of the immediate ground attracted our attention and brought enlightenment. ‘ Guano ! ’ we cried together ; and, girding up our loins, we ran.

III.

WHITE, BLACK, AND GREY.

In the course of spirited arguments on matters political, theological, and educational, it has become clear to me that heat is generated, not by the clash of opposing principles, but by a difference in the interpretation of facts. One may feel a distaste for the personality of a man who holds that mercy has no place in warfare ; but one can argue with him quite calmly. If, on the other hand, he defends the use of expanding bullets on the ground that they are essentially humane, one can only quarrel with him.

I imagine that much of the friction which exists in these days between the sexes arises from the fact that they see many common objects from different angles and under different colours. Grey is the prevailing colour for men ; women are inclined to see things white or black. There is no question here of superiority or inferiority. Some things *are* grey, and it is better to see them grey ; some things *are* white or black, and it is better to see them

white or black. But the difference of colour involves a difference of moral values.

Seeing things grey, men are, on the whole, less sweeping in their judgments than women. 'He drinks like a fish,' says the man, 'but at bottom he is a good fellow.' 'I can't bear him,' says the woman, 'he makes such disgusting noises over his soup.' 'A bit of a liar,' says the man, 'but devoted to his wife and children.' 'Insincere,' says the woman, 'and I shouldn't be a bit surprised to hear that he drinks.'

And, as he is more tolerant of defects, the man is also more guarded in his enthusiasms. 'I always rather distrust these extremists,' says the man. 'A saint, if ever there was one,' says the woman. 'If you ask me,' says the man, 'I think there's a good deal of humbug about it all.' 'Oh, I *wish* you had been at the meeting,' says the woman; 'I am sure it would have converted you.'

So they speak. 'Whether wisely or no let the forest judge.'

As grey is the prevailing colour for man, it is also for him a restful colour; and, when some glaring contrast of black and white offends his moral vision, he is generally willing to compromise and blend the two extremes into some neutral shade that will be less painful to the eye.

But for woman grey is neither the prevailing colour nor a restful colour. It is too closely allied to black to satisfy her, and she cannot rest happy till she has changed it into white.

On the whole, man has hitherto been the predominant partner, and his ideal has been a grey world of compromise. Woman's ideal is a white world of perfection. If perfection be attainable, and durable, there is obviously much work for women in the world, with or without the vote.

But there is one set of facts over which my theory breaks down—namely, cats. For I am aware that, whereas most women see cats white or, at worst, grey, I see them wholly and irretrievably black. That they are warm, soft, and insinuating, I fully admit; but, then, so is temptation. That they will lie for hours dozing on a comfortable lap and purring contentedly, is also true; but that is no proof that they are capable of devotion or even of warm attachment. A stout German gentleman once spent the greater part of the night, in a railway carriage, with his head upon my shoulder, also purring contentedly; but that did not imply that he was ready to sell his life in my defence; only,

that he found the position restful. And, if I had subsequently found him torturing a horse, I should, without scruple, have handed him over to the police, although stray hairs of his were still warm upon my coat.

Similarly with cats ; when I see a cat after a bird, I want to hand it over to the police. That it is a cat's nature to torture when it kills, is an explanation of the crime, but not a defence. Cruel natures kill cruelly ; but it is permissible to dislike cruel natures. If I were a rat, I could still respect a dog, however much I might deplore his personal likes and dislikes ; but, as a mouse or a bird, I could only feel towards a cat as the Hebrew prophets felt towards the Assyrians.

The cat is a nocturnal animal ; and it is not in the daytime, when drugged by sleep or blinking at the sun, that Graymalkin betrays her secret thoughts. The fiercest ruffians have innocent dreams, and probably Iago looked quite gentle as he slept. But, when night 'scarfs up the tender eye of pitiful day,' the cat gives itself away hopelessly : so hopelessly that I can only marvel that it is still allowed to exist. For that obscene cry, that rises crescendo from the bushes or the neighbouring tiles, not only murders sleep, but rouses all the latent capacity a man may possess for righteous indignation. Hatred, lust, cruelty, and all that is diabolically wicked are blended in that cry ; and, as Luther hurled his inkpot at the Devil, the just man will strew the lawn with medicine-bottles, boots, brushes, and whatever missile his guardian angel thrusts into his hand.

I assume that refined but credulous ladies do not associate with these blasphemous orgies their own sleek favourites who, made bold by long immunity, sprawl insolently on the cushions or stretch their supple limbs upon the hearth-rug. But I know what the Persian and the Tortoiseshell were saying last night under my window ; and they know that I know it ; and, when I come into the room, they slink away with one backward glance out of their wicked eyes, which means, 'Tell about us if you dare ; or, rather, say whatever you like ; for nobody will believe you.'

And I don't suppose that anybody will. And yet, in 'The Two Magics' Mr. Henry James has given the life-history of every kitten.

G. F. BRADBY.

PRIDE OF SERVICE.

FOR a week life had been a bitter hell of frenzied toil, freezing cold, insufficient food snatched at long intervals, broken spells of sleep, and constant icy wetness.

For a week the weather had grown steadily worse, and for the last two days the big iron barque had been staggering before the gale, her decks never clear of water for more than a few seconds at a time, and her crew half dead, blinded, and dazed with sheer fatigue.

Twenty-three times had he rounded the Horn, the captain told the mate, but never had he come through worse weather. And the 'Old Man's' remark passed down through the mates and the bo'sun to the crew, to be repeated amongst themselves with a pitiful pride.

But the glass was still falling—although it seemed an utter impossibility that wind or sea could be worse—and even the skipper, good sailor as he was, dared not risk running any longer. They had been pooped several times, and the last wave . . . It was a huge livid-green monster, its top curling over in foam and the crest tearing off in spray that flung ahead of it in ice-cold sheets and stung the faces staring back at it. As it towered high over the stern it broke the force of the wind for a moment, and the lull in the deep organ notes and fiendish whistling shrieks of the wind in the rigging left them in a curious stillness.

Noises that had never ceased, but had been unnoticed in the louder clamour, suddenly became startlingly clear—the groaning of the labouring ship, the hiss of the spray falling on the decks, the clangling of ports, the crashing thuds of the bows plunging into the seas. The stern rose, sluggishly at first, then faster and faster till it seemed as if the whole ship must be turned bodily head over heels. Then, with a roar of boiling surf, the top curled over, hung suspended an instant, and fell, sweeping over the helmsmen lashed and clinging to the wheel, burying the ship as a half-tide rock is buried by a breaker, seething and swirling waist-high on the men who had leaped into the shrouds. Two of the boats simply

vanished, and the port bulwarks went with them, shorn off clean and level with the decks.

The skipper clawed his way along the poop-rail to the mate and bellowed in his ear. The mate stooped his head till lips and ear met, and even then could only catch fragments of the sentences. 'All hands . . . get the sail off her . . . must heave her to . . . another like that, and . . .' He tossed his hands with a gesture of finality.

The night came down while the weary crew were struggling with those demon sails, and the work went on in the darkness. The men on deck were constantly smothered in foaming rushes of water that lifted them off their feet and rolled them, clutching and scuffling, into the scuppers and against the rails. But as fast as the water poured off they were up and at it again, battered and bruised, aching and exhausted, clutching at the ropes and heaving at them in a passion of labour. At times they did their work as much under water as above it. Hauling on the main lower-tops'l, they had to work amidships, and here the water was never lower than their waists and often over their heads. A man had three ribs broken by being hurled against the stanchion. Another was flung down and his elbow jarred so cruelly the arm was crippled, and swung limp and helpless. But both men worked on. Another was washed overboard as they made a dash for the shrouds to get aloft and roll up the sail. The rail rolled under as they sprang, and dipped them, clinging like limpets, below the surface. The weight of the water was too great for some of the aching muscles and the man went. By a miracle he was swept along the side, and washed up against the shrouds of the foremast. He clutched them, managed to hold on, and dragged himself aboard again. He staggered aft and joined the others, and was heartily sworn at by the mate. He wore an apologetic air as if he had really done something that he deserved being sworn at for.

Up aloft it was, if anything, worse than on deck. It was pitch-black and the wind had an edge that cut like a knife. It was impossible to face it with open eyes, and to make it worse showers of hail kept driving up. While they lasted a man could only bend his head or twist his back to it. The hailstones were as big as small marbles and drove with the force of a stone from a catapult.

The running rigging was cased in ice and had to be hammered with the back of an axe to break it free. Every sail was solid and stiff as if it had been carved from wood. The men beat at it with

clenched fists ; they tried to batter a dent in it to give a grip to their clawing fingers ; they clutched and scratched with hooked fingers till the nails broke and blood oozed from the finger-tips. Sometimes a man would manage to get a grip, but the sail would shake furiously and break free again. One hand was useless for such work, and the men, with both hands busy, balanced themselves on the swinging foot-rope, pitching and reeling, fighting like demons, sweating in spite of the vicious cold, carrying in every second the risk of being flung bodily from their lurching foothold down to the deck below, or over the side.

It took nearly three hours of heart-breaking struggle and repeated failures before they got the sail on to the yard and made fast. The skipper had been waiting with anxious glances astern at the following seas that raced down on them out of the darkness and threatened every instant to broach them to. The moment the sail was in, and before the men had time to come off the yard, the helm was put down and the ship's head began to crawl round into the wind. As she came round and the wind caught her abeam, she rolled over and hung horribly with the lower yardarms dipping into the swirling water, and the men clinging on to a yard that stood almost straight up and down. They lost sight of the decks, and could only see a cauldron of broken white water with the masts disappearing into it. A fortunate lull allowed her to recover a little, although she still lay at a terrible angle with her lee rail dipped and the water seething up the decks to the hatches. But she was hove to, and must take her chance at that. Nothing more could be done ; so the port watch was sent below for an hour.

One by one, as the back-wash of the seas gave them the opportunity, the men snatched open the entrance to the fo'c's'l and plunged down the ladder.

On the fo'c's'l floor a foot and a-half of water was surging to and fro, washing with it a jumble of clothing, tins, platters, boots, caps, matches, sodden biscuit, swabs, and every other kind of litter.

Hanging on lines wet socks, shirts, mitts, and mufflers jerked and swayed to the lurching of the ship. They had been hung there in the vague but vain hope that they might dry. Every stitch and stick in the place was soaked and sopping, and water seemed to ooze and drip from everything. A slush lamp hung from the roof, the naked wick giving a dim and murky light and thickening the air with evil-smelling smoke.

The air stank—there is no other word for it. Remember, the cover had only been off the entrance, during the past week, for a few seconds at a time as the men dashed in and out.

The noise was appalling. The woodwork creaked and groaned, the seas hammered on the skin of the ship just outside and beat thunderously on the deck overhead, the tins and pannikins clattered and jangled across the floor, and even through the closed scuttle the roar of the wind boomed incessantly.

But with it all the place was a haven of rest to the numbed and dead-beat men. At least they were out of that screaming wind that one could barely face and breathe. They could wipe the blood from their faces where they had been cut by the stinging hailstones. They could breathe on their numbed and frozen fingers and try to beat back the blood into their stiff hands—some of them with sea-sores open to the bone—and best of all, they could lie down and cease effort for a time.

The lower bunks on the lee side were full of water which slopped at times, as the ship rolled, into the bunks above. The men, too tired to talk or even to smoke, clambered heavily and dully into the wet bunks on the windward side. They crawled in 'all standing,' just as they had stood, not even removing their oilskins and sou'westers.

One young lad, with blue lips and chattering teeth, stopped to try to pull off his sea-boots. He could not move them on his swollen feet, and a grizzled old man, with a face the colour of mahogany and a deep cut gaping red over his eye, ceased mopping at the wound with a dirty wet rag and growled at him, 'Let be. Y' may have to turn out again any minute.' The lad groaned and clambered to his bunk.

Another man was munching at a wet biscuit. 'Wonder when we're goin' to get some hot grub again,' he said. The old man laughed grimly. 'Ask when we're goin' to get a drink o' water,' he said. 'I'd be satisfied wi' that; but the beakers is empty an' we can't risk pumpin' more from the tanks, case the salt water gets in an' spoils it.'

A couple of men swore half-heartedly. 'Tink a mans would be more wet enuff,' said one. 'Ev'ry bits of me vass wet troo an' troo, except mine t'roat.'

'Same here,' said the other, licking his lips. 'I'm fair parched. An' my blooming side's that sore . . .' He was the man whose ribs had been broken, although he didn't know that till days after.

In little more than half an hour they were roused out by the mate, who had to come down and pull some of them half out of their bunks before they would wake.

'All hands,' he kept roaring at them. 'All hands. Shake a leg—tumble up—lively now. All hands, d'you hear?' The next minute he was gone and the men turned out and fumbled stupidly at sou'wester strings and wrist lashings on their oilskins.

'Suthin' carried away, most like,' growled one man. The lad was standing hanging to his bunk and kicking his toes, one foot after the other, hard against the wall. 'One thing,' he said, looking over his shoulder, 'wotever it is, it can't be worse'n we've had.'

The old man laughed shortly. 'There's just one thing——' he began, when the cover was flung back and the mate's angry face peered down at them. 'Come on, y' cripples,' he yelled. 'All hands, you loafin' curs....' The cover clapped on and they heard the thunder of a sea over it. The opening appeared again suddenly. '... all hands. *Man the pumps.*'

'An' there ye have it,' snarled the old man. 'There's yer one thing worse. I thought she was gettin' sluggish.' He cursed horribly. 'Ye thought it was hard work afore,' he said, lurching to the ladder foot. 'Ye'll know better now. We're done wi' watch below from now to the nearest port—if ever we make a port. I know. Once afore I've had it... pump day an' night—pump when ye ought to be sleepin'—pump when ye ought to be restin'—Stop pumpin' to go aloft, an' hurry down to go back to pumpin'. Knee-deep or neck-deep in water, but keep on pumpin'. Wet an' froze an' wolf-hungry, but keep pumpin'. Pump, pump, till yer back's broke an' yer heart's breakin'.'

'I wouldn't care,' the man with the broken ribs muttered hoarsely, 'if I wasn't so damn dry.' He wiped his mouth with the back of a sore-eaten hand and ran his dry tongue over his lips.

It was a week later, and again the barque was hove to; but this time she was not alone in the ring of storm-torn sky and sea.

A quarter of a mile away, a mailboat liner rolled and plunged and wallowed to the mountain seas. She was one of those monsters that in a harbour loom up in towering sides and tiering decks with all the massive grandeur and immovable bulk of a rock fortress. Out here, for all her bulk, she was pitching and reeling like a cockle

boat in a tide rip. She was no more than a toy and a plaything for the savage sport of the long rollers. She was lifted and flung down bodily, rolling rail and rail, staggering under the shock of the seas, quivering and shaking to their blows.

The week had made a difference to the barque. Now, there was none of the leaping and plunging, the tearing and frenzied action of a wild horse under the bit. She rose sullenly and stiffly to the lift of the seas; sank, dead and inert, to the hollows; hung there in long and dreadful pauses till it seemed the next sea must overwhelm her, and lifted her head again to each as if with a last dying effort. Every now and then her recovery was too slow, and a sea lipped smoothly in over the smashed bulwarks and swept foaming along the decks. Each time she staggered drunkenly, and slowly and painfully recovered buoyancy enough to lift her streaming decks above the water. To the men watching from the steamer she looked so pitifully weak and weary, and the seas so relentlessly cruel and strong. Watching a sailing ship at sea, one forgets she is a thing of wood and metal and canvas. She is alive and sentient, and one feels for her exactly as for any other live thing. To those on the steamer the barque took the look of a weary and worn-out swimmer, battling grimly to hold a tired head above the whelming seas. Men groaned when a sea caught and swept her, and waited, heart in mouth, for her to shake herself free before the next wave rushed at her.

On the barque's deck the men clustered in a knot along the lever-arms of the pumps and slowly see-sawed them up and down. They wore the same look and had the same motion as their vessel's—slow, and dead and listless, bone-weary, dazed and almost beaten. But an hour at a ship's pumps has been admitted killing hard work by a toil-hardened man, strong and fit and well fed; and these men had been on them a week, only stopping in shifts for bare time to take a snatch of sleep, without one full or satisfying meal, without having the wet clothes once off their numbed limbs and bodies.

One of the steamer's lifeboats trailed astern of the barque, the cork-jacketed crew fighting at the oars to ease the strain on the line or to check the swooping dives that threatened to smash them against the ship's side.

The doctor from the mailboat was below, trying to do his work despite the darkness and the noise, and the maddening jerkiness of the ship's motion. On deck the steamer's officer and the barque's

mate were talking in clipped and shouted sentences, the wind blowing away fragments of their talk.

The officer had come aboard immediately after the doctor, and, as his feet touched the deck, he paused in consternation as he felt the sluggish, sickly heave under him. The men at the pumps grinned widely at one another as they noticed his instinctive check, the step back, and the movement of the hand to the rail.

'It's all right, sir,' called the old man with an angry, half-healed cut over his eye. He straightened his back stiffly as the pump came up. 'She'll last . . .' He and the others threw their weight back on the lever, the pump clanked dismally, and a gush of clear water swilled out. '. . . till you're off 'er, anyways.'

The deck canted slowly and steeply, the officer went down it with a run, fetched up against the poop ladder, and ran up it nimbly.

The captain had already gone below with the doctor, so the two mates stayed and talked.

The mate of the barque told something of the week they had passed through, and the other listened, nodding his head at intervals. Once he interrupted as an angry sea lashed aboard and swirled waist-deep round the men at the pumps, and the vessel stopped shuddering under the blow and the weight on her decks.

'By God,' said the steamer man under his breath, and then shook his head and bawled: '. . . don't like the feel . . . in a bad way, isn't she ?'

'Bad enough,' shouted the other, 'gainin' on the pumps too . . . all we can do. . . .'

'I'm to ask your Old Man . . . taking you off.'

'Hey ?' shouted the mate, cupping his hand about his ear.

'You ought to leave her . . . I must ask . . . can't wait, y'know . . . we're the mail.'

'Don't fancy we're leavin' 'er,' answered the mate; 'wouldn't 'ave signalled you for a doctor . . . should just about make it . . .'

A cross-wave rose and hit the ship a blow that shook her through, and brought her up as if she had struck a rock head on. Another wave swooped and filled the deck rail high, and the ship lurched, and rose again, slow inch by inch.

'She's half drowned,' bellowed the officer, '. . . waterlogged hulk.'

The mate caught the last word or two. 'Hulk be damn,' he shouted back. He leaned close so that the other should not miss what he said. 'We had this same hulk loggin' her nine an'

a-half knots four days ago.' He stood back to look triumphantly at the steamer man, then caught at him and shouted in his ear again, 'I've knowed full-powered steamboats that couldn't do that much.'

The officer shrugged his shoulders helplessly, 'Must see your Old Man, anyway,' he called. 'I'll go below . . . can't talk in this wind. . . .'

Down below he talked with the captain, with a reek of hospital smells in their nostrils, and the noises of the sea and wind in their ears; while the doctor listened curiously and—having by now done the little he could for the unconscious man with the broken head he had been called to—patched and bandaged various members of the crew.

But the officer's talk ended, as the mate had said it would, in the lifeboat casting off and dropping down to the steamer that circled round to pick it up, with none of the barque's crew on board.

'Give your captain my compliments,' the barque's captain said to the steamer mate, 'and tell him I should make port inside three or four days, and she should swim for that. I couldn't leave 'er while there's a chance—but he'll understand.'

And when the message was delivered to the mailboat captain on his own bridge, he nodded his head slowly. 'Yes,' he said simply, 'I understand.'

He talked down little tubes a moment, and, in obedience to his quiet words, the sea giant turned and threshed her way up into the wind again and swung her ponderous bulk to shelter the barque dangerously fighting to get under way again; and oozed good oil along her length to drift down and give the fighter the extra chance of a smooth.

In the bridge-deck shelter the doctor made his report and talked wonderingly, and with little understanding, of what he had seen; and the captain listened in silence, and with full understanding, while his eyes watched the barque edging cautiously round and heeling to the weight of the wind.

'Why do they do it?' the doctor finished. 'No one could have blamed her captain for leaving her. Your officer's evidence could clear him with any court or owners.'

'It mightn't clear him with his own conscience,' said the captain.

'But he is putting his life and his men's after his ship,' persisted the doctor. 'She may sink under him any minute.'

'And she may make her port,' said the captain.

'That's what he said,' replied the doctor. 'But I confess I don't understand it. It seems foolish to me.'

The captain laughed a little.

'Tell me,' he said, 'what made you go off to her when she signalled for a doctor?'

'Why,' said the doctor in some surprise, 'you told me they'd know we carried the mail, and they wouldn't stop us unless it was life and death.'

'But you could have declined to go,' persisted the captain. 'I told you of the risks you ran. An open boat in that sea, and getting on and off the barque—'

The doctor spoke a little stiffly. 'I hope I should not allow fears for my personal safety to interfere with my duty.'

The captain pointed silently out to the barque, and then said softly, 'Exactly.'

'I see,' said the doctor after a pause—'I see. It was his duty to bring his ship to port if he could do it, and his duty must carry its risks. But the men? It was in their hands, really. He asked if they would stand by, and he must have left if they said "No." They sent two men aft to answer him. One was an old man with a horrible inflamed cut. He said something about never having deserted his captain yet, and not going to begin now. The other only said they would all stick by what Old Rory said. The old man was Rory evidently. You never saw such a lot of starved, miserable, worn-out wretches in your life, and the life they're living there must be . . . well, I can't tell you.'

'There's no need,' said the captain. 'I've been in sail in my time. But it's an old rule in sail or steam—a good captain sticks to his ship, and a crew sticks to a good captain.'

'A good rule, I grant,' said the doctor, 'but it's asking a lot to expect those poor wretches to keep it. I offered to bring one injured man away. Three ribs broken—*broken*; and he'd been working with them broken. He admitted he couldn't do much on the pumps, but he could keep a look-out. He'd look pretty, he said, loafing in the dry fo'c's'l of a steamboat while his shipmates stuck it out. Nice tale to tell 'em when he got ashore. And he sniffed at me till I felt ashamed for asking him. Why do these men "stick it out"? They haven't the captain's and my incentive of duty.'

The doctor stopped and blew his nose violently.

'I don't understand it,' he said impatiently.

'Yes, you do,' said the captain quietly, still with his eyes on the barque. She was almost round now and was gathering way, still under the partial shelter of the steamer.

'You told me that unconscious man had barely a chance left,' the captain went on. 'But you stopped and worked a full hour over him. Why?'

'Oh, well,' said the doctor, 'I can hardly explain. He had a chance, you see. But that's hardly a parallel case. I was doing my work, but not at the risk of my life.'

'Would you have left it if there had been risk?' asked the captain.

'Well, no, perhaps not,' admitted the doctor. 'He was in my hands . . . it's a sort of professional pride, I suppose . . . I can't explain,' he repeated.

'So I can't explain,' said the captain, 'and those men could explain still less. But professional pride is as good a word as any. We'll let it go at that.'

He called an officer and spoke a few curt sentences to him, there was a jingle of wires and clanging of bells far below them, and the steamer threshed her screws astern, checked, and began to swing slowly. The full force of the wind caught the barque; they saw her heel, leap with new life, and go plunging heavily off with swathes of foam flinging wide from her bows. They saw a figure leap into the weather rigging and wave to them, and the steamer's siren roared a deep, full-throated answer.

'Dip!' the captain shouted to his officer. 'Dip your flag'; and as the flag fluttered down to the salute and up again, 'Them and their professional pride!' he said.

BOYD CABLE.

SIXTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS.

NEARING JORDAN.

BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

CHAPTER XX.

OLD PARLIAMENTARY HANDS.

SIR WM. HAROURT; DR. TANNER; THE O'DONOGHUE;
 SIR JOHN RIGBY; JOSEPH COWEN.

THE peaceful passing away of Sir William Harcourt on the last day in September 1904 rounded off a strenuous life. Unlike his great contemporaries, Disraeli and Gladstone, there was no long watching of the nation by his dying bed. No whisper of serious illness was buzzed through the newspapers preliminary to the announcement that life had closed. During the previous session it was sorrowfully observed that his health was failing. His speeches were marred by a troublesome cough, fought with dauntless courage.

During the progress of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's first Budget he contemplated making a final addition to a long list of great speeches. Shrinking from anything in the way of taking formal farewell of the historic scene in which he played a leading part for thirty-four years, he yearned for opportunity of making one more big Budget speech. It was vouchsafed, but its fulfilment lacked the glamour of earlier triumphs. The audience, sympathetic, was scanty, and the veteran gladiator, hampered by physical infirmity, was not able to rise above the depression of surrounding influence.

There was something in the circumstances of the hour when the old fighter's funeral-bell was tolling that added to its pathos. Mr. Balfour's Ministry was tottering to a fall. The victory of the Liberals at the pending General Election was assured. Of the leaders of the column long toiling through the wilderness Harcourt, like Moses, died without setting foot on the Promised Land.

Happily for his current comfort and his ultimate fame, he fore-stalled opportunity of possible squabbling as to what place he should hold in the coming Liberal Ministry. Too proud to incur possibility

of playing the part of laggard on the stage, he, before the session was far advanced, announced his withdrawal from public life. He would have been more than mortal had such conclusion been arrived at without a feeling of disappointment. It was no secret, and he was the last man in the world to hide such secret, that he was deeply wounded when, on the retirement of Gladstone in 1894, the Premiership was passed on to another, a younger man, who a dozen years earlier had served as his subaltern at the Home Office.

This arrangement was fatal to the harmony, eventually to the stability, of the Government. Harcourt's temper, at best not angelic, was not smoothed by this knock-down blow. Probably, if he had not had in mind and at heart his great scheme of Death Duties, precursor of others more ruthless in range, he would have retired from office in disgust, and from a corner seat behind the Treasury Bench watched with cynic smile the harassed movements of his old colleagues.

As soon as he completed the great accomplishment of his Ministerial career, the carrying of the Budget of 1894, rumour of his impending resignation set in with unrestrained severity. Meeting one of his Cabinet colleagues at a party with which Lady Tweedmouth celebrated the opening of the session in the following year, I asked whether there was any truth in the persistent rumour.

'Well,' said the harassed Minister, with for him rare bitterness, 'if Harcourt doesn't resign very soon, the rest of us will.'

Harcourt regarded these rumours with grim humour. Talking to me in this same month of February 1895 he said with big chuckle, 'There is hardly a night when I go to bed in Downing Street that I am not called up by the representative of some news agency wanting to know if it is true I have resigned. It reminds me of Louis XVI., when, after his flight from Paris, he was captured and interned at the Tuilleries. Every night soon after the poor man had turned into bed, the mob, suspicious of fresh escape, used to assemble before the palace windows and demand to see him. The hapless King, yielding to necessity, got out of bed, slipped on his dressing-gown, put on the night cap of Liberty, and, popping his head out of the window, showed himself to the crowd, who thereupon went home content. So the news agency man comes to me in the dead of the night to assure himself and his employers that I have not slipped out of Downing Street by the back door.'

Happily, before he died Harcourt had brief and partial

opportunity of realising how high was the esteem, how warm the personal affection, the House of Commons cherished for him. To tell the truth the demonstration was needed. For fully a quarter of a century he was accustomed to find his interposition in debate the signal for noisy interruption from the other side. It was only their fun. It would have been death to a weaker man. What they really thought about him was disclosed when he announced his intention of retiring from public life upon the dissolution of the Parliament elected in 1900. Thereafter, on the few occasions he spoke he was listened to with touching deference. Signs of physical failure, disclosed chiefly in persistent cough accompanying a broken voice, were observed with profound sympathy.

In measure he deserved the character attributed to him through many years of being irascible to the extent of unbearable disagreeableness. He had a short temper and a sharp tongue, neither upon occasion restrained. Beneath this mask he painstakingly hid one of the kindest hearts in the world. To find him at home, or to meet him in genial society, was a rare delight. Three years before his death my wife and I were week-end guests at Malwood. The house-party was small, there was no discordant note, and the host was at his very best. He did most of the talking, and none was inclined to break the spell of his enchanting discourse. During fifty years he had known most interesting men, read the best of books, taken prominent part in leading events, and was gifted with a tenacious memory.

I recall one of the delightful stories he told the charmed circle of his guests. At the famous fancy-dress ball given at Devonshire House in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, Harcourt went in the official wig and gown of his ancestor, Simon Harcourt, Lord Chancellor in 1713-14. In the crush he came across Lord Halsbury, arrayed—something to the displeasure of Queen Victoria it was whispered at the time, her Majesty thinking the period too recent to be travestied—as George III.

‘Ah,’ said his Majesty, ‘you are, I believe, my Lord Chancellor.’

‘Yes, sire,’ said Harcourt, ‘I am, if you are Queen Anne.’

The intense comedy of the suggestion of Lord Halsbury personifying Queen Anne shook Harcourt’s big frame with Homeric laughter.

Another story was woven round a crow’s nest. From their habit of attaching themselves to the neighbourhood of ancient mansions the birds are understood to be of aristocratic tendencies.

A colony, disturbed by the departure from their homestead of a family on whom disaster had fallen, resolved to quit the locality before the incoming of the new tenant, whose name they understood was Smith, far too plebeian a cognomen for them. On the day the new tenant's baggage arrived, an old crow, preparing to start with the rest, hopped down and read the name on a portmanteau. Hurrying back to the crowded tree-top, he said,

'It's all right. We can stay. He spells his name with a J.'

Smijth is obviously quite another thing than the common Smith. So the crows stayed on in their old home.

On leaving Malwood, one of the guests, writing his name in the Visitors' Book, added a verse headed 'Transformation' :

Dear Squire of Malwood ! London knows
A scathing tongue, a temper quick ;
In this far Forest's sweet repose,
Almost your manner's seraphic.'

His death while still nominally in the harness of Parliamentary life disposed for a time at least of the question of a peerage in the Harcourt family. At the period of the Coronation King Edward, who instinctively did graceful things, offered a peerage to the old Parliamentarian. Harcourt in a manly letter asked permission to decline the honour. The King, in a second autograph letter, expressed the regret with which he acceded to the request. Harcourt was justly proud of these two letters, which he was pleased to show to personal friends.

The most implacable political Irishman, readiest to proclaim his hatred of the Saxon, must have been touched by the tone of the obituary notices of Dr. Tanner appearing in the English papers on the morning after his unexpected death. To tell the truth, Tanner's habitual conduct in the House of Commons was more than even his colleagues could stand. Whilst Parliament was sitting it frequently happened that Mr. Dillon and John Redmond were more concerned to 'keep Tanner in hand' than they were for the moment to struggle with the common enemy. When the fit was on him no one could prophesy what he might say or do. On the quietest phases of an inoffensive House his strident voice would break with some irrelevancy of personal vituperation. At such times it was absolutely fatal if his eye chanced to fall upon Mr. Chamberlain. The effect was akin to a spark dropping on a train of gunpowder.

In one of the latest scenes for which he was responsible he, by way of showing impartiality, turned upon one of his compatriots no longer a colleague.

'That's a lie,' he shouted, following some remark of Harrington's. The Speaker, promptly rising, called upon him to withdraw the offensive phrase, and apologise. Even in his cups Tanner was, above all things, punctilious for the preservation of order.

'No, no,' he said, wagging his head knowingly at the Speaker, 'I can't get up, you know, as long as you're on your legs.'

In the end he was suspended, and, under threat of removal by the Sergeant-at-Arms, withdrew. As he stumbled out he caught sight of Mr. Chamberlain on the Treasury Bench. 'Judas!' he yelled, pointing towards him with fully extended arm. Taking another stride towards the Bar, he turned again, yelling at the top of his voice, 'Judas! Judas! Judas!'

This instance is indicative of the peculiarity of his outbreaks. They had neither point nor purpose. He, as he once explained, 'felt like it,' and just let himself go. The patience and forbearance of the House, its business interrupted, its dignity temporarily debased to a pot-house level, were marvellous. They found echo in the newspaper articles referred to.

Another Irish Member of equal prominence, but in quite other fashion, was The O'Donoghue. If anyone knowing all about it had written his life, there would have been produced one of the most pathetic stories ever told. He was not a very old man when he died. But he must have been sorely weary. Bearer of an historic name, owner of a fine property, the idol of the people, he entered Parliament with every prospect of a brilliant career. Endowed with a fine presence, a good voice, he possessed that gift of oratory which is the birthright of Irishmen. He sat for Tipperary, and was a Nationalist at a time when Parnell was still at college. I often heard A. M. Sullivan speak of him when his casual progress through any of the streets or villages of the West of Ireland was a march of triumph. The Irish people must always be adoring some one. In 1857, and for many years afterwards, their idol was The O'Donoghue. As time went by, the Member for Tralee (as he became) began to take other views of political affairs. He assumed a friendly attitude towards the Government, was suspected of looking out for office, and was hated accordingly.

In Tralee, where all the people used as he passed to cry aloud

‘God bless him !’ they now chanted at his heels a doggerel, of which I remember two verses :

‘ Who no longer holds a place
In the hearts of Erin’s race,
Scattered o’er the earth’s broad face ?
O’Donoghue !

‘ Yes ; true men the world all o’er
In deep sadness now deplore
That their Motherland e’er bore
O’Donoghue ! ’

It will be observed that the note struck is rather of sadness than of anger. The people still had a lingering love for their early flame, and were inclined to weep because of his inconstancy. The O’Donoghue sat for Tralee through the Parliament of 1874, his appearance in debate on Irish affairs being always the signal for riotous outbreaks on the part of his countrymen. At the General Election of 1880 he was ousted from his seat, and thereafter disappeared from political life.

As Member for a division of Cambridgeshire, Sir John Rigby, later a Judge, first entered the House of Commons. After a single session at St. Stephen’s he disappeared in the Liberal rout of 1886. Coming back in 1892, Gladstone, with an eye to assistance in carrying his Home Rule Bill, made him Solicitor-General. He took his seat on the Treasury Bench, recommended by a high reputation at the Bar, where he was bracketed with Horace Davey. By another coincidence it soon became apparent that he had no greater aptitude for House of Commons life than was displayed by that eminent jurist. It used to be said of Horace Davey, whilst still in the Commons, that fresh from a case in court where his advocacy was held cheap at a fee of a hundred guineas, no Member on his legs could more speedily disperse a bored House.

Rigby, beginning by emptying the House, ended by filling it with an uproariously merry audience. The fun was not less hilarious because it was manufactured by the listeners. It certainly was not flashed forth by the speaker. As Rosaline shrewdly observes in ‘Love’s Labour, Lost,’ a jest’s prosperity lies in the ear of him that hears it. The House of Commons made up its mind to regard the Solicitor-General as a funny man, and succeeded. The only time he initiated a burst of laughter happened one night when standing at the table delivering a weighty speech, he thrust his hand

into the breast-pocket of his coat in search of a handkerchief and dragged out with it a well-seasoned briar wood pipe.

What was really comical about Sir John was his unconscious transference to the table of the House of Commons of the manner of Lincoln's Inn. When a simple question was put to him, he drew up a many-folioed case in reply, and read it with supernatural solemnity.

He had a peculiar enunciation, making much of prepositions and emphasising with thunderous force any word ending with the syllable 'ing.' The House, quickly noticing these peculiarities, mercilessly played upon them. The Solicitor-General's close association with Gladstone in the conduct of the Home Rule Bill naturally did not endear him to the Opposition. Baiting him had the double advantage of wasting time and varying a dull sitting with a little sport. Elaborate questions, meaning nothing, were framed and gravely submitted to the Solicitor-General. When he remained immovable the House was filled with cries of 'Rigby! Rigby!' After two years' experience of this kind of thing he gladly escaped from the unsympathetic atmosphere of the House of Commons to the quiet dignity of the Judicial Bench, where he was much more at home.

Joseph Cowen, the famous member for Newcastle-on-Tyne, refused to offer himself for re-election in 1886, albeit his triumphant return was a certainty. The occasion found for retirement was singular. All his life he had been in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, advocating it at a time when the Liberal Party opposed or at best shunned it. Now under the leadership of Mr. Gladstone they had nailed its colours to the mast-head of their ship. They were going to the country avowedly in search of a mandate that was expected to carry a Bill their Leader was known to have drafted. Cowen with his far-reaching influence would have been of immense assistance had he come to his proper place in the front rank of the crusade. But though he loved Home Rule much he personally hated Mr. Gladstone more, and ostensibly standing aside from the fight in the country he did much to undermine the Liberal cause in the North of England.

Three years later there were rumours of his intention to re-enter the Parliamentary arena. Alluding to this he wrote :

* Blaydon-on-Tyne ;
May 28, 1889.

‘ MY DEAR LUCY,—There is no truth in the report you refer to. I have not the remotest intention of re-entering Parliament, or of

resuming participation in public affairs. I was only too glad to get quit of the worry, insincerity and claptrap of political life. No man can say safely what he may do in the future, but I cannot conceive any condition of things arising that would induce me again to submit to the irksome slavery of party life.

‘Yours truly,

Jos. COWEN.’

After his withdrawal from the House of Commons he dwelt in seclusion on the outskirts of Newcastle. Abstention from public affairs was only apparent. He no longer appeared on the platform, but he firmly held the reins that governed his paper, the *Newcastle Chronicle*, in his day the most important and influential journal in the North of England.

With a pretty wide and intimate acquaintance with public men, I count Joseph Cowen as the most striking and original come across in the course of a sixty years’ journey. I fancy he must have been exceedingly rich. His expenditure on his personal needs probably did not exceed two or three hundred a year. His dress was peculiar. There was a fable in the House of Commons that his square-cut coat, his loose waistcoat, and roomy breeches were cut out by his own hand, and sewn together by a village tailor. Amongst his claims to Parliamentary distinction is that he was the first man who appeared in the precincts of Westminster wearing a billycock hat. Never in his life had he worn what is called a ‘topper,’ and was not going to begin because he had been elected head of the poll to represent his native town in Parliament.

Higher distinction he gained as one of the few ever-diminishing number of heaven-born orators left to the House of Commons. His splendidly polished periods, his flights of poetic fancy, were delivered with a deep Northumbrian burr that lent to them new melody. His speeches were evidently carefully prepared, I believe learned off by heart. There was nothing like them in the House of Commons, and they were only too rarely delivered.

The last time I saw him I was his guest in the historical mansion in which he dwelt in the suburbs of Newcastle. Stella Hall was built long before Charles the First came to the throne. Joe Cowen, though his Radical instincts made light of ancient associations, liked to think that in his house Cromwell had slept for more than one night on his way to the wars. He showed me at the top of the house a chapel, approached by a secret staircase, where, in Queen Elizabeth’s time, Mass was performed for the master, family, and faithful servants of the Catholic owner of

Stella Hall. The chapel is now a lumber-room. There still remains behind the door the receptacle for holy water.

I was shocked, after a considerable interval, to see how wasted away was a dear friend of more than twenty years' close intimacy. Frail in body, he was still fiery in spirit, full of delightful talk of men and literature. Like the Shunammite woman, he dwelt among his own people, and no man was more widely loved.

CHAPTER XXI.

OLD PARLIAMENTARY HANDS (*concluded*).

'JEMMY' LOWTHER, BERESFORD-HOPE, FRANK LOCKWOOD, WILFRID LAWSON, W. S. CAINE, STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, LOUIS JENNINGS, SIR JOHN MOWBRAY, SIR JOHN GORST.

FAMED in story were the Last of the Mohicans and the Last of the Barons. The Right Hon. James Lowther, commonly and affectionately known as 'Jemmy,' was the last survivor of the Tories who flourished in days when Palmerston was classed as a Liberal.

His very speech betrayed him. In this twentieth century Borough Members, catching the Speaker's eye, jump up and invest debate with the flavour of a Town Council or a Vestry. Jemmy Lowther brought to the duty of speech-making a solemnity of manner that verged on ponderosity. His sentences were each a miniature sermon. His utterance of the common phrase, 'The Right Hon. Gentleman,' elevated the tone of debate to cathedral pitch.

With the solemnity of manner, the almost reverential woodenness of countenance, ancient tradition required as appropriate to the function of Parliamentary speech, there lurked round Jemmy's lips a smile broadly reflected on the countenance of his audience. Even when speaking on such sacred themes as Property or the Church, there was visible in brief pauses in the slowly uttered speech a slight protuberance of the cheek as if the tongue had thither strayed.

In later days it was most delightful to watch him on his legs by the corner bench below the gangway taking a fatherly interest in Arthur Balfour. A ruggedly honest, straightforward man, he never liked the coalition of the Conservative party with a wing of the

Liberals strongly tainted with Radicalism. He admitted it was worth the price—the defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule scheme. Nevertheless he did not like the companionship. A Protectionist from boyhood, he was not to be drawn within Mr. Chamberlain's personal circle even when that statesman began to hammer into the foundations of Free Trade the wedge of Preferential Tariffs. He mistrusted the Greeks though they brought presents.

The exigencies of political strategy leading Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour into close alliance with the Dissident Liberal, Jemmy looked on the Treasury Bench with unconcealed distaste. The stars in their courses at the polling-booth fought against him at critical times. When in 1886 his party came in for what proved a long term of office he found himself without a seat. When he won one in the Isle of Thanet it was too late. The loaves and fishes were divided, the larger proportion, as Jemmy growled, going to the gentlemen who had come to be known as Liberal Unionists.

Some men of meaner mould would have seized the opportunity to turn against old political friends. With his personal popularity, his long-established Parliamentary position, Dizzy's Chief Secretary for Ireland might have made things uncomfortable for a hybrid Ministry. On rare occasions, when circumstances thrust Arthur Balfour into a position not consonant with the traditions of a Conservative Premier, Jemmy was constrained to utter rebuke. He spoke more in sorrow than in anger, his emotion leading him into a rotundity of phrase that blunted what otherwise might have been a damagingly sharp point.

Towards the end, feeling less and less inclined to take part in what he regarded as political controversy unworthy of old Parliamentary days, he devoted himself almost exclusively to the task of denouncing the Standing Order forbidding peers of the realm to take part in Parliamentary elections. His soul, which hated humbug in any shape, was vexed by the farce enacted at the opening of every Session, prohibiting peers from indulgence in practices to which some were notoriously addicted.

One of his annual excursions in this field is remembered by reason of the trotting out of what experts regard as one of the best 'bulls' that have had birth at Westminster. By way of showing how utterly disregarded was the injunction of the Standing Order, Jemmy cited the case of the Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury), who had during the recess prominently concerned himself on behalf of a Conservative candidate at a by-election. Hart Dyke, who followed in debate with intention of pooh-poohing the whole busi-

ness, was evidently struck by this example of indiscretion in high places.

'The right hon. gentleman,' he said, reflectively gazing on the back of Jemmy's head on view two benches below, 'has certainly made a telling point. He has gone to the top of the tree and has caught a very big fish.'

Stricken in health, but brave at heart, Jemmy came down at the beginning of the Session of 1903 to reproduce his hardy annual. Old friends who had not seen him during the recess were shocked at the alteration in his appearance. Even after he had passed his sixtieth year he retained an aspect of almost boyish jollity that belied, whilst it added charm to, the gravity of his ordered speech. Content with moving to rescind the Standing Order, he shrank from challenging a division, doubtful whether his wrecked frame could stand the stress of taking part in it.

This was his last appearance on a scene where, as long as any of his contemporaries live, his memory will be kept green.

Lady Mildred Beresford-Hope, eldest daughter of the eighth Marquis of Salisbury, wife of the founder of the *Saturday Review*, whose 'Batavian Grace' Disraeli on a memorable occasion extolled in the House of Commons, died in the spring of 1881. It need hardly be said that the appeal made in the touching letter subjoined was not disregarded.

From A. J. B. Beresford-Hope.

'Arklow House, Connaught Place, W. :
June 15, 1881.

'DEAR SIR,—Allow me very sincerely and with the same good humour as you exhibit towards myself to thank you for the genial aspect in which you present me as on various occasions so in your present number [*the World*].

'Having done so, may I, in addressing as I know I am doing a kind-hearted and sympathetic gentleman, confess how this presentment of myself grates upon me at this moment? The light-spirited man whom you present to the public is in truth a heart-broken wretch, utterly prostrated by the greatest of all human calamities.

'I attend Parliament now because I believe that it is my duty to do so. But I should far rather nurse my grief in solitude and silence.

'Forgive this personal explanation, and,

'Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

A. J. B. BERESFORD-HOPE.'

Sir Frank Lockwood was a man capable of making his living in various ways. Indeed he tried several. As I have mentioned in an earlier chapter, this distinguished advocate and popular M.P. once fronted fortune on the stage. Shortly after leaving the University he joined the company of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, then on tour, and creditably filled a minor part. Following the example of his manager, he assumed a name other than his own. It was as 'Mr. D. Macpherson' he blazed through the provinces. Later, whilst waiting for briefs, he dabbled in journalism, and for some time pocketed a guinea a week for writing a London letter for a North country paper.

His first brief was given to him by Sir Albert Rollit, then Mayor of Hull, and was obtained by the personal influence of Mrs. Kendal, who, whilst generously applaudive of the innate dramatic talent displayed by 'Mr. D. Macpherson,' was under the impression that Frank Lockwood's career really lay at the Bar. If he had been hissed off the stage, if he had failed at the Bar, or if he had found it impossible to live on his guinea a week for the London letter, Lockwood would certainly have earned a comfortable living by use of his pencil. In the course of the Parnell Commission he was always knocking off little sketches. The drawing was 'amateurish' critics said. Of its rich, original, abounding humour there was no mistake.

Had this alternative not been open to him; there would still have remained an honourable vocation. He would have commanded high fees had he hired himself out as a First-nighter. His genial presence beaming in the stalls and his hearty laugh were worth much to an anxious manager placing a new piece on the stage.

During Lockwood's lifetime a report was current that Mr. Murray had made overtures to him with intent to publish the Parnell Commission sketches. This, as implying intention to bring the fugitive work out in book form, is an error. The sketches, had they been forthcoming, were intended for the enlivening of *Murray's Magazine*. For various reasons—one being that the drawings were widely dispersed—Lockwood declined the offer.

There was another collection by the same skilful hand, less known to fame, but at least equal in merit to the Parnell sketches. These were the fruits of intermittent leisure moments during the progress of the Chester Election Committee, which sat after the election of 1880. Lockwood was engaged in the case, and finding handy, supplied at the cost of the State, pencils blue and red, illustrated with marvellous originality and vigour whole volumes of evidence

taken. Judges, witnesses, counsel, and spectators in the Court all appear in this gallery of graphic arrangements in blue and red.

Lockwood used to tell with gusto a story of Continental travel. He and his wife were journeying in Switzerland with a kinsman of the latter and his spouse. He was a Scotchman, whose name I may write Mackenzie. Like many lairds of high degree, he had a territorial designation derived from his estate. When the party came to an hotel, and were invited to enter their names in the visitors' book, the Scotchman wrote: 'Lochwynock and Mrs. Mackenzie.'

Lockwood bore with this for some time. At length not seeing why his companion should monopolise advertisement of his home-stead, he, at the next opportunity, took up his pen and wrote: '26 Lennox Gardens and Mrs. Lockwood.'

He had not at that time come into his knighthood.

Whilst Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a stern unbending Radical, occasionally contributed an uncompromising speech to debate on Imperial affairs, his stock subject was Temperance, his hardy annual an address in opposition to the motion for adjournment of the House over the Derby Day. As through many years Jemmy Lowther moved the resolution, the House, always eager to be amused, was on these occasions habitually crowded.

Lawson's speeches sparkled with good stories. The last time we chatted in the lobby of the House of Commons he told me one he was saving up for a suitable opening in debate. But Death stepped in and barred the way. It is too good to be lost. In the summer of 1908 a banquet was given in Westminster Hall at which the officers of the French Fleet visiting our shores were the honoured guests of Parliament. Two Weary Willies resting on a bench on the Embankment were occupying their enforced leisure in discussing public affairs.

'I say, Bill,' said one, 'what's this yere ententy cordiyally they talk about?'

'Don't know. Reckon it's one of them darned teetotal drinks.'

Unlike certain apostles of temperance, Sir Wilfrid sternly refrained from all traffic with the unholy thing, Drink. Some whilst totally abstaining as far as they were personally concerned, did not impose upon their guests strict observance of their example. A. M. Sullivan, a staunch teetotaller, habitually provided wine for visitors sharing his hospitality. On one occasion within my knowledge that other stern, unbending teetotaller, W. S. Caine, bowed his head in the house of

Rimmon. It happened in 1886, at the beginning of the schism in the Liberal Party, when Caine gave a dinner at the Devonshire Club in honour of John Bright. The heat of political passion generated thirst. When the wine bill came in, Caine must have studied it with natural repugnance, aggravated by its excessive amount.

He had a family grievance of his own in the matter. His father-in-law, Hugh Stowell Brown, in his day a famed preacher in Liverpool, had a blameless desire for bottled stout at his meals. He found no supply of the beverage when he visited his son-in-law at his house by Clapham Common. After for some time suffering the privation with Christian patience, he struck. His ultimatum may be summed up in a phrase adapted from the rigid rule of the mercenary Swiss troops of the Middle Ages :

‘No bottled stout, no father-in-law.’

After a period of ineffective passive resistance, Caine capitulated, and his esteemed visitor was thenceforth comforted at meal-times with flagons of stout.

Broken down by the stress of a turbulent Session, aggravated by the teasing tactics of the Fourth Party, Sir Stafford Northcote set out in the winter of 1882 for a holiday in summer climes. Friendly note being taken of the event in ‘The Diary of Toby, M.P.’ in the current issue of *Punch*, brought the following response :

From Sir Stafford Northcote.

‘ November 27, 1882. 30 St. James’s Place, S.W.

‘ MY DEAR SIR,—Pray assure Toby, M.P., that I look upon him as a most valuable member of the House, and sincerely trust that the Clôture may never be applied to him.

‘ Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?

‘ I need hardly say that I am much touched by the great kindness shown to me by so many of my friends, including my enemies. Life in the House of Commons has many trials, but I find them much more than compensated by the many pleasant feelings which they evoke. I hope to be back in my place at the opening of next Session, prepared to endure any amount of fire from the “Cross Benches” or any other part of the House.

‘ Believe me,

‘Yours faithfully,

STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.’

What to-day is in speech and writing unblushingly referred to as the closure was at the period of its conception delicately alluded to by use of the original French word. It will be noted that Sir Stafford, responsible as Leader of the House for this introduction of a device bitterly resented by Conservatives when in opposition, is so punctilious in writing the word in its native form that he is careful not even to omit the circumflex accent.

Reference has been made in the course of this narrative to a quarrel suddenly evoked which shattered a long-established, intimate friendship between Lord Randolph Churchill and Louis Jennings.¹ In one of many conferences between the two it was arranged that at a critical stage in the career of Lord Salisbury's Government the Member for Stockport should move an inconvenient resolution and that Lord Randolph should support it. At the last moment, to the surprise of the House, who had got wind of what was in store for the Government, and to the consternation of Jennings, Lord Randolph jumped up and made a speech that not only forestalled his friend's resolution, but carried it far beyond the measure of hostility decided upon.

What the victim of this remarkable strategy thought of it, appears from the following letter. It may be added that at the conclusion of Lord Randolph's address, Jennings tore up the notes of his speech and quitted the House. Lord Randolph made various overtures for renewal of the ancient friendship: they were sternly declined. The two never spoke again. When, after his death, Lord Randolph's will was read, it was found that, having nominated Jennings as one of his executors, he did not strike out his name.

From Louis Jennings.

‘73 Elm Park Gardens, S.W. 14th March 1890.

‘MY DEAR LUCY,—I have kept away from that place, part y because I wished to avoid being torn to pieces by the Press correspondents, partly because I wished to breathe for a time an air where lying and treachery are not quite so rife. Therefore I have been doing a little country walking—for which Mrs. Lucy, at any rate, will forgive me.

‘That explanation given to you by Randolph is all very fine, but it is not half the story. If the speech itself had been prepared for the express purpose of ruining my Amendment, and rendering

¹ *Sixty Years in the Wilderness; More Passages by the Way*, p. 360.

it impossible for any Conservative to support it who valued the good opinion of his constituency, it could not have been more skilfully devised. Surely he might at least have sent me word he intended to make it. Had there not been abundance of time for him to speak on the main question before that night ?

‘ But that is not all !

‘ If I am in town tomorrow I will call at the Reform somewhere about 5. But do not depend upon my coming, or put yourself out of the way. I shall be at the House on Monday anyhow.

‘ Suppose that Mr. G. asked you to move an Amendment, and pressed it on you, and then when you were committed to it told you he thought “ it could not be defended ” and was “ sorry you had done it ”—he having drawn it up—and then sent you word he “ intended to stand altogether aloof from it ”—and finally, on the night when it was to be moved, came down to the House and jumped in before you with a speech which damned the whole thing—what in such a case would you think of Mr. G. ? When you are in a mood for answering riddles, answer *that*.

‘ Yours ever,

L. J. JENNINGS.

The following indicates Lord Randolph's attitude towards his Cabinet colleagues a little more than three years after he had abruptly withdrawn from their councils :

‘ Newmarket. April 6, 1890.

‘ DEAR MR. LUCY,—Very many thanks for your letter and enclosure. I wish the Tories had a little Yankee fairness and common sense. Surely it is not possible that they will swallow the Land Bill. At any rate I have made my protest, not by private but by public memorandum. They cannot talk about “ stabs in the back ” *à la* Jennings. Goschen's responsibility for the Bill if it be true is utterly inconsistent with his speech on the second reading of the Ashbourne Act, 1888, in reply to me. But I think and have reason to know that the Bill is Balfour's alone and expect that is so, for it betrays great ignorance of Ireland, and one or two clauses reek of coercion.

‘ Yours very truly,

RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.’

In 1890, having convinced himself that he had finally done with politics, Lord Randolph threw himself heart and soul into the business of horse-racing. His letters of this date are full of references to his new pursuit :

From Lord Randolph Churchill.

* June 17, 1890. 2 Connaught Place, W.

'DEAR MR. LUCY,—It is very kind of you asking me again to luncheon, and it would be most pleasant for me to meet the cheerful and interesting party you propose.

'Tuesday, July 1, is the first day of Newmarket 1st July meeting. I find that my racing interests always suffer seriously if I am not there to look after them myself, and nowadays racing interests mean £.s.d. to so large an extent that they cannot safely be neglected.

'Would you be able to let me go to luncheon with you on Monday 31st instead of the Tuesday. If you cannot manage this conveniently I will be very glad to go to luncheon with you Tuesday, as I would not on any account miss another opportunity of availing myself of your kind hospitality.

'Government difficulties grow greater and greater. I think Matthews and Monro a case of fish and kettle. I hear that Lord Salisbury's health is very bad again, and poor old W. H. Smith about the same as his chief. "Sic transit, etc."

'Yours very sincerely,
RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.'

* August 5, 1890. King's Hotel, Brighton.

'DEAR MR. LUCY,—I am much too lazy to write articles and the flattering inducements of your correspondent leave me unmoved. Moreover, I could not write an article on "Conservative Democracy, its hopes, possibilities, and future," without directly or indirectly criticising the acts and policy of the present leaders of the Tories, and this would do no good at present.

'Weather here is heavenly and I sympathise with you profoundly in your being compelled to listen to the drivel and twaddle of Sir George Campbell, Storey, Conybeare, and Co.

'Yours very sincerely,
RANDOLPH S. C.

'My wife says that Mr. Ward's sketch is the best thing ever done of me. I am afraid I have been a poor sitter.'¹

It was a bitter disappointment to Sir John Mowbray that on a vacancy occurring in 1898 he was disqualified in the running for the nominal but highly prized position of Father of the House of Commons. The following letter is interesting as presenting an authoritative version of the traditions attendant upon succession:

¹ This is a reference to a portrait for which, at [my request, he sat. An addition to a small collection of portraits of contemporaries.

From Sir John Mowbray.

* January 30, '98. Warennes Wood, Mortimer, Berks.

DEAR LUCY.—Thanks for yours. I will give you the facts of the case. I think many members were rather suspicious that the *Times* hailed so readily the claims of Mr. Bramston Beach to the Fathership of the House of Commons. There is undoubtedly another tradition that the Father of the House should have held the same seat continuously. But I am not aware of any decision of Speaker Brand or of the question having ever had any formal decision. When members change their seats, they generally do so because they have lost one seat. I have sat continuously in eleven Parliaments, serving forty-five years from the day I entered the House in 1853 to the present hour, and there are other circumstances which I have put down in parallel columns in a scrap which I inclose. As the matter is personal, I offer no opinion. It was always known that Gladstone was disqualified, because he ceased to be M.P. altogether for a period of nearly eighteen months from the time he left Newark 1846 to the time of his return from Oxford 1847.

If I recall rightly I am the only member of the Parliament of 1852 now in the House. I send you an old list (which please return) of members in the House twenty-four years ago, many of whom are dead and many out. If Whitbread and Sir C. Ford had been in House they would have been the Father. Lady M. and my daughter send kind remembrances to you and Mrs. Lucy,

'Sincerely yours,
J. R. MOWBRAY.'

Sir John Gorst's defeat at Cambridge University in 1906 marked the close of a brilliant but chequered Parliamentary career. He was an asset the Conservative leaders wantonly, though not inexplicably, threw away. Lord Salisbury never liked him, and in the prejudice Arthur Balfour was faithful to family tradition. A minor office was tossed to him in the stop-gap Government of 1885, only upon the insistence of Lord Randolph Churchill. In subsequent Unionist Administrations up to 1895, deference was paid to his swordsmanship in debate by finding for him place and salary. But in these years he never rose above an Under-Secretaryship, bearing with outward meekness the irony of subordination to Lord Cross at the India Office and of contiguity on the Treasury Bench with certain other members of the Cabinet who from blood-relationship or other qualities were more in favour at Hatfield.

When in 1892 his connection with the Education Department lapsed, an ingenious attempt to get rid of so formidable a critic on the Ministerial hearth was made by offer of the Governorship of the Isle of Man ! Sir John declined to walk into that particular parlour.

From Sir John Gorst.

‘Howes Close, Cambridge. November 2, 1900.

‘MY DEAR LUCY,—After seeing the new appointments in to-day’s *Times*, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of replying to your very kind letter. You have always spoken of my Parliamentary conduct in a manner which I only wish I entirely deserved.

‘It is of course mortifying to be passed over, but I did not take any step to bring myself to Lord S.’s notice, partly because I knew it would be useless, and partly because I persuaded myself, like the fox in the fable, that a seat in the Cabinet was not an object to be desired.

‘Some offence I gave to Lord S. in or before 1885. I know no more than you what it was, but he has never forgiven me and never will.

‘Kind regards to Mrs. Lucy.

‘Yours ever,

JOHN E. GORST.’

It should be recalled to the credit of Mr. Balfour, that on the first opportunity subsequently presenting itself, he secured for his old colleague a second-class pension (£1,200 a year) out of the fund available for ex-Ministers. When a few years later Sir John found himself legatee of a family fortune, he made haste to resign his pension, a procedure not always adopted in similar circumstances.

The subjoined letter from Lord Eversley affords an interesting peep at the habit of close supervision of public functions in which she took part that characterised the late Queen Victoria.

The story about Disraeli and the deaf member is new to me.

‘The Atheneum. May 29, 1914.

‘DEAR LUCY,—I have been reading with interest your article in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE of June.

‘You speak of having been at the opening of the Law Courts by the late Queen and of having admired Gladstone in his robes of Chancellor of the Exchequer as he stood on the platform in the great Hall. I was First Commissioner of Works at the time, and arranged the ceremony. When I proposed to the Queen that Mr. G. as Prime Minister should be in the procession up the Hall and on the platform she objected. She said that only the Home Secretary (Harcourt) should be in attendance on the occasion.

‘I then pointed out to her that Mr. Gladstone was not only Prime Minister but was also Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as

such was for certain purposes a member of the High Court—and that his presence on the occasion was obligatory in the procession of judges. The Queen therefore gave way, and it was arranged that Mr. G. should appear in the procession in the line before the Lord Chancellor and after the other judges, in his robes as Chancellor of the Exchequer—and very grand he looked in them.

‘Later, after the death of the great man when it was determined to erect his statue at the junction of Aldwych and the Strand in front of St. Clement Danes and within sight of the Law Courts, Mr. Thorneycroft asked me to go to his studio and see the model he proposed for the statue.

‘He depicted Mr. G. in modern costume with uplifted arms as though addressing a great public audience. I very much disliked it. The attire of the figure was violent and was wanting in dignity and repose. I reminded Thorneycroft of Mr. G.’s appearance at the opening of the Law Courts and how magnificent he looked in the robes of Chancellor of the Exchequer. I suggested that he should depict him as he appeared on that occasion. It would be the more appropriate as the statue would be in view of the Law Courts. I also suggested that the pose should be simple and dignified.

‘Thorneycroft adopted my suggestion and made a new model. The resulting statue is, I think, one of the best in London, and to me at least it is reminiscent of this occasion I refer to and of the Queen’s objections to his being there.

‘This may perhaps interest you.

‘Yours very truly,
EVERSLEY.

‘The story you tell of Thomasson differs somewhat from one which I recollect.

‘The speaker was Mr. Disraeli, and Thomasson seated himself next to him on the front Opposition Bench and held out his trumpet so as better to hear the speech.

‘Disraeli was much annoyed, and when he sat down turned round to some friend on the Bench behind him and was reported to have said, “Why could not that man be satisfied with the disqualification which Providence has so happily endowed him with?”

‘I perfectly well recollect Thomasson on more than one occasion seating himself on the front Opposition bench and using his trumpet to hear speakers through.

‘My story however is not inconsistent with the fact that much the same observations may have occurred to you on some other occasion.’

(To be continued.)

SPRAGGE'S CANYON.¹

BY HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

CHAPTER XI.

WILBUR P. STOCKER COMES TO SPRAGGE'S CANYON.

I.

THAT night Samantha had a bad time. She found herself unable to sleep and unable to lie still. Love of George consumed her. She had fought against the overmastering passion desperately, but the sight of him collapsed on the rocks had been too much for her. The mere act of ministering to the stricken man rekindled all those darting flames which she had tried in vain to extinguish with tears and self-abasement. Each night and morning she had prayed :

' O Lord God ! Thy will be done ! But don't let my George marry this pretty doll ! '

She would repeat this a dozen times, like a *dévote* telling her beads.

Instinct told her that the pretty doll would become a terrible burden to her George. And when she beheld Hazel in his arms, when she saw him staggering down that perilous path, where one false step meant instant death, she would have changed places with the doll, even if the death penalty had to be exacted. And then for a few minutes she had been in heaven. Streams of delight flowed through her while she bathed that dear head and fanned air into his lungs. When he opened his eyes they had rested for an instant kindly upon her, when he opened his lips he had thanked her !

Was she predestined to go down to her grave with this sweet memory, and nothing more ?

Would life be worth living without George ?

Unlike Hazel, who was afraid of her emotions, Samantha was not ashamed of wanting the husband of her choice, but she was ashamed of wanting the property of another woman. It seemed

¹ Copyright, 1914, by H. A. Vachell, in the United States of America.

perfectly natural that she should love George, and unnatural that her love should not be returned, because Hazel—so she decided—was unworthy. From the first she had thought: 'She don't love him as I do, why should she have him?' The inhumanity of a disastrous marriage made her wild.

She knew, moreover, that other interests engrossed Hazel, ambitions which she, the country girl, could hardly understand. Hazel had prattled to her of society, of triumphs in ballrooms and at receptions, of homage paid by other men, of envy aroused in other women. She had spoken also, quite sincerely, of what could be accomplished by American women, of their duties and responsibilities as citizens of the greatest republic in the world. She had even attempted to explain what 'feminism' meant, and the revolt of Woman! Samantha had listened politely, impressed by Hazel's cleverness, astonished at her flow of words, but unconvinced by her arguments, and utterly unable to perceive her point of view. Dimly, however, she had apprehended that Hazel desired many things, whereas she herself desired only one.

She got out of bed and knelt down.

'O Lord God! Thy will be done! But don't let my George marry Hazel Goodrich, if it's all the same to You!'

Repeating this again and again, she felt easier in mind. Rising from her knees, she sat by the open window allowing the cool breeze to play upon her feverish body. She noticed that the moon was nearly at the full, and she wondered whether George would kill a fat buck. This was the third night in succession that he had waited for hours in the hope of gratifying Hazel's wish to taste venison. George must indeed be passionately in love when he thus sacrificed his sleep.

Samantha muttered to herself:

'He's jest the same dose I hev.'

She went back to bed.

In the next room, Hazel also was lying awake. She had heard George leave the house; she had seen him standing outside in the moonlight with a rifle in his hand; and, so seeing him, the awful suspicion that her lover might be a robber of stage-coaches assailed her with increased virulence. It ought to have occurred to her that the only stage in those parts was driven by Uncle Zed, who carried, as a rule, nothing much more valuable than butter and eggs. A country girl would have guessed at once that George was after deer. Hazel, to do her justice, felt ashamed of her suspicions,

but they kept her wide awake none the less, putting a keener edge upon her determination to transplant George. She, also, kept on repeating to herself: 'I hate this Canyon; I hate those Bungards and Goldenheimers; I could never spend my life here; I am utterly unlike Mrs. Spragge and Samantha.'

And yet she wanted George, wanted him more than ever. Even if—she hardly dared put her thoughts into words—even if he were engaged in some nefarious traffic, what a joy, what a privilege it would be to touch him to finer issues, to help him grow to his full stature. She had a glorified vision of George playing Darby to her Joan, thanking her with tears in his eyes because she had raised him to her heights. Every fibre thrilled at the thought. And the world of Oakland, ay, the larger world across the Bay, perhaps the whole continent, would know that this had been her life's work; that a Daughter of the Golden West had justified her existence consummately.

She remained awake for some hours, because she was intensely excited. Life seemed the better worth living because she had glimpsed death.

Before she went to sleep she passed in blissful review those minutes upon the pinnacle. If George had kissed her—! As she fell asleep, she murmured to herself:

'I do love him.'

II.

Two days later Hazel was helping George in the berry-patch. Small sections of this were irrigated twice a week, because the water available for such a purpose had to be taken from the creek much higher up the Canyon, where the stream during the dry season became a tiny rivulet. Twice a week in July it was just possible to collect enough water to irrigate a quarter of an acre of berries.

It was easy and pleasant work.

George vigorously wielded a spade, rapidly making miniature banks of earth. Hazel, hoe in hand, diverted the water from one banked-up square to another, knocking down a tiny wall and so forming a channel for the precious percolating fluid which the warm dry soil absorbed greedily. The morning was very hot, but Hazel could slake her thirst with ripe berries and dip burning hands into the cool water.

'Father made one mistake,' said George.

'Only one?'

'He'd oughter hev built the house lower down the Canyon. Then we'd hev had a plenty o' water, because the creek flows good an' strong past the house.'

'That's where you want it, isn't it?'

George laughed. Hazel's remarks concerning all matters connected with the practical running of the ranch betrayed an astonishing ignorance and inexperience. For example, she had asked Samantha why the two cows were milked at regular hours. Why not slip out with a pail and get what milk you needed at any odd hour?

George explained.

'The creek here is five feet below the level of the ground we hev ter irrigate. See? The water could be taken out with a motor engine—there's not enough force or fall fer a ram—an' mebbe some day I'll buy me one, but as things air we hev to depend on our dam, two hundred yards up the Canyon.'

'I understand perfectly.'

'By Gum!' exclaimed George. 'It's fun workin' with you, because you do catch on mighty quick.'

'Tell me some more about berry-raising.'

'It's easy to raise 'em. Pickin' and marketin' ain't so easy.'

He continued leisurely, talking as he worked, never wasting a minute nor one drop of water. Twice a week during the early spring and once a fortnight during the summer he took a light load of berries to Aguila, which he sold to Adolf Geldenheimer. Adolf bought honey and butter, also eggs, apples, and poultry, crediting George's account with divers small sums. In his turn Adolf sold to George seed-barley, groceries, and dry-goods. At the end of the year the accounts generally balanced each other. Hazel remarked shrewdly:

'Mr. Geldenheimer makes a double profit.'

George had to admit this.

'Saves us a heap o' trouble,' he remarked. 'And everything else is clear gain, dollars to be invested.'

'Everything else includes cattle and horses and hogs?'

'Yes—everything lawful and unlawful.'

'Unlawful?'

'I sell venison as mutton, or goat. I'm well fixed, money to burn, but I don't burn it.'

'What do you do with it?'

'Buy business property in San Lorenzy; I've a good few dollars on loan, secured by mortgage. Say, I'm tellin' you all my secrets.'

'Not all, George.'

'Yer right. I'd fergot.'

She thought that he looked very sly.

'Why do you sell venison if it's illegal to do so?'

George roared with laughter.

'We air particular.'

Hazel was slightly ruffled.

'Evidently you aren't.'

'I'm as honest as my neighbours—more so, I reckon, than some of 'em.'

'Oh!'

He continued cheerfully:

'Poor folks ain't overly honest. In early days, squatters around Aguila clapped their brand onto many a calf an' colt belongin' to old Don Juan. Father wasn't too extry particular. Everybody done it.'

'Do you do it still?'

'Why no. Thar ain't the same chances. Barb-wire put an end to 'em. Say, you do look sweet in that outfit.'

The 'outfit' had been specially designed by Hazel, the right equipment for such work as she could do—a canvas skirt, rather short, displaying to advantage her small feet and trim ankles, a thin flannel shirt with a sailor's collar, embellished by a bandana hand-kerchief, and a sombrero bought at the Aguila store. Hazel had rolled up her sleeves, discarding gloves. Face, arms, and hands were already a clear brown. She smiled reflectively, for she was expecting this particular remark, and prepared to enlarge upon it.

'It's a nice compliment to you, George.'

'How's that?'

'I wanted to—to try to identify myself with you and your work. I feel quite at home in them.'

'And you look fine. Someway, you seem nearer to me, more of a flesh an' blood woman, less of a city-raised angel.'

She laughed, although her tone was grave, as she said, hesitatingly:

'Would you like me to feel that you were coming nearer to me?'

'You bet I would.'

' Suppose I asked you, just as much for your own sake as mine, to alter a little your mode of speech.'

' Quit swearin' ? '

' I mean your grammar and pronunciation. You say "ter" instead of "to," and really you treat the letter "g" with quite shameless indifference ; apparently it has offended you.'

' Do I say "ter" instead of "to" ? '

' Don't you know that you do ? '

' Mis' Bungard used ter—used to be at me everlastinly—'

' Ever-last-ing-ly.'

' Everlastingly, then, to talk as she done.'

' As she did.'

' That's right. As she *did*. Does it matter—much ? '

' It matters a lot to me, dear. It would matter still more, if—if we were married, and if we were meeting people who might underrate you because you spoke differently from them. That would hurt me.'

George considered this. Then his face brightened.

' If you marry me,' he said slowly, ' I'll go to school again with you.'

' Won't you do what I ask for your own sake ? '

' Not if you can't marry me.'

' Then you have no real wish—apart from pleasing me—to develop yourself, to improve all along the line, to go on rising, instead of standing still or going back ? '

To her dismay he refused to take her seriously.

' I'm jest about right fer Spragge's Canyon. It would hit mother and Samanthy bang in the eye if I began to put on frills when I was talkin'.'

' My father didn't think I was putting on frills when I talked more grammatically than he did. He was proud of me.'

' You was a girl. I reckon your father paid considerable fer yer schoolin'. He wanted ter see the value of his good dollars. Must hev warmed him up good when he seen they wan't wasted.'

Hazel felt slightly impatient. George's shrewdness at once dismayed and delighted her. She realised her impotence to 'get at' him in her own personal way, but she realised also with increasing conviction that he was worth 'getting at.'

' Who's this ? ' exclaimed George.

A buggy was approaching.

' Must be some dam book-agent,' continued George. ' I'll

fix him in two ticks. The gall o' them fellers ! Regler leeches. Now, you watch me handle him. We'll hev some fun.'

The buggy came to a standstill at the hitching-post opposite the front porch. A man descended and hitched his horse. He was wearing a white linen dust-coat, and a soft felt hat pulled over his eyes. Seeing two persons in the berry-patch, he walked towards them. Hazel uttered a sharp exclamation.

' What is it ? '

' It's—it's a friend of mine. You've heard me mention him. It's Mr. Wilbur Stocker.'

' Gee ! '

III.

Wilbur greeted Hazel with impressive politeness, explaining fluently his appearance in Spragge's Canyon.

' You put the notion of coming into my head. Candidly I had forgotten that there was such a county as San Lorenzo. I had never been here. I made a few enquiries, and discovered that nobody else had been here. It appeared to be quite virgin territory. I took the cars within a few hours of reading your letter. Put in the Fourth travelling down, put in two good days in San Lorenzo, and about the old landing. Conditions are resurrecting themselves. The Landing used to do good business in early days, and it will do good business again if I can read the times. All ways of transportation—roads, rail, rivers and sea—will receive due attention.'

' That's so,' assented George.

Dismayed by Mr. Stocker's unexpected appearance, George had supposed that the stranger had travelled a long distance to see Hazel. Obviously he had come on business. Otherwise he would not have waited two days.

' Couldn't return home without calling on you,' continued Wilbur. ' Perhaps you're ready to go back to Oakland. If so,' he made a formal bow, ' I'm at your service as an escort.'

' You'll stop and eat dinner ? ' asked George.

' I shall be delighted.'

' That's good. I'll go tell mother.'

' I'll attend to the water,' said Hazel.

George nodded pleasantly to Wilbur, and walked away, turning after a few steps—

' Shall I put yer plug into the barn and give him a feed ? '

'Thank you,' said Wilbur. 'I'm stopping at Aguila.'

Then he stared interrogatively at Hazel, taking careful note of the 'outfit.'

'What are you doing here?' he asked curtly.

'Can't you see? Irrigating berries.'

He perceived that she resented this surprise visit. But he was too self-satisfied, too sure of his own claims upon her, to grasp the real situation.

'Comic opera?'

'Not at all.'

'Shall we sit under that tree? You look rather warm, Hazel.'

She followed him to a rude seat under a cottonwood, biting her lips with vexation. In two words, he had transported her and himself to Oakland. She was quick enough to appreciate these two words.

Comic Opera!

Oakland, indeed, had spoken, delivered its verdict—smilingly amused, smilingly cynical. Wilbur changed his tone.

'You look perfectly charming. What a handsome fellow your "Corydon" is! And this place—idyllic!'

'Are you sneering?'

'Heaven forbid! I am—I admit it—in the dark. Your aunt either would not or could not enlighten me. I inferred a whim, a maiden's Declaration of Independence.'

'I congratulate you, Wilbur, upon your inferences.'

'Thanks!' He lighted a cigarette, adjusted his pince-nez, and removed his dust-coat, appearing spick and span in a cool grey flannel suit. He crossed his legs, lay back lazily regarding her, and exhaled a neat ring of smoke. Then he continued in the same slightly derisive tone:

'Mr. Patrick Hennessy spoke of you with Celtic enthusiasm. It seems you have had adventures.'

'I wrote—misadventures.'

'Have they amused you as much as you expected?'

'More, much more. I was getting bored to tears in Oakland.'

'There was, there is, Stocker's Landing.'

She frowned. How stupid clever men could be! How exasperatingly incapable of understanding women! How dared he mention Stocker's Landing at such a moment! George might be excused for 'rushing things,' not this sophisticated, complacent man of business. She decided that he must be punished,

but her quick wits failed to conceive what might be adequate punishment. He was in the mood to twist any words of hers into ridicule. Nevertheless, she said tartly :

‘ You see I wanted a change for the better.’

Ah! That stung. Wilbur lifted his too-thin eyebrows, displaying his teeth in a forced smile. Gold sparkled in those teeth. Some of them would never ache again. A tell-tale fastening betrayed a ‘ plate.’ She decided that his sharp eyes were set too close together. His complexion lacked colour and texture. And yet, noting these disabilities, she felt sorry that she had hurt him.

‘ I meant,’ she explained hastily, ‘ that Stocker’s Landing is too like Oakland. I wanted an immense change. I wanted to see myself with detachment.’

‘ But why ? ’

She remained silent.

He pressed the point, quite pleasantly, speaking without any irritating derision.

‘ Why do you seek detachment, Hazel ? And why do you hunt for it in such a place as this ? How did you come to know these good people ? Are they old friends ? Why is there an air of mystery about this visit ? ’

She answered him with courage.

‘ I’ll try to tell you, even if it hurts both of us. I want to be honest with you and honest with myself, but it’s not easy. I hate to admit that I don’t quite know what I do want. Education ought to teach one that at least, but it seems to work the other way—with us American women. The Spragges—who are not educated as we understand the word—do know what they want, and I envy them. You know what you want. And that makes it so difficult for you to sympathise with me, and the odd unrest I suffer from. You will get what you want—’

‘ I wish that I was sure of that, dear.’

He spoke kindly and temperately, touching her hand lightly. Hazel amended her last sentence.

‘ At any rate you will get part of what you want—the business end. That counts, doesn’t it ? ’

‘ Of course it counts.’

‘ Tremendously ? ’

‘ Well, yes—tremendously. But why do you lay such emphasis on that, Hazel ? And you look at me so oddly. I’ve always understood that you liked my being keen about business, and

nobody knows better than you what success in business exacts, the concentration, and so forth.'

'Yes, yes. I'm glad you're keen, Wilbur. It makes it easier for me, if—'

'If ?'

'If I don't marry you. You see it's like this. I hate to say it, but you've forced my hand. And, perhaps, between us two, plain speaking is best.'

'I'm quite sure it is.'

'If I don't marry you, it won't knock you out, will it ?'

Wilbur threw away his cigarette, moving restlessly, frowning as he tried to peer deep into the hazel eyes which confronted him steadily. There was a long pause.

IV.

Finally he answered the question honestly. It may not be quite fair to add that early in life Wilbur had grasped a cardinal principle, inherited from his father. He knew that it paid a man to be honest and truthful. Fools and knaves told lies and attempted to evade their obligations. He prided himself justly upon being 'straight.'

'It would not *kill* me,' he said coldly. Never had he felt less like a lover as he made this damaging admission. It annoyed him intensely that Hazel should have turned the tables on him, forcing his hand at the very moment, too, when he wished to keep his trumps back for a carefully meditated *coup* !

Hazel murmured :

'I almost married Clinton Tarrant.'

'Really ?'

'But I wanted more than a one-third interest in my future husband. Poor Clinton has to devote one-third of his attention to that invalid mother and sister ; the other one-third is given to science. What was left did not quite allure me.'

She said this pleasantly, but in a voice as cold as his. She saw that he winced, as he retorted with some vehemence :

'Quite obviously you were not madly in love with Tarrant.'

'Exactly. And as obviously I am not madly in love with you. Nor are you madly in love with me.'

'Yes, I am. It's no passing fancy with me. I've wanted to marry you for three solid years. I've never paid attention to another girl. I swear that I can make you happy.'

'How?' she asked softly.

He perceived that he must play his trumps now, if he wished to score.

'You and I,' he said slowly, 'are not sentimentalists. You're twenty-two, and I'm ten years older. Each of us wants a partner. Together, we ought to achieve our ambitions. While I was in Tacoma and Seattle, I did business with some big men. And where do you think the business was done? In their offices? Not much. At their homes, after dinner. Each man had the right sort of wife. I was never better entertained. I felt in my bones that I'd struck the right crowd, and that they wanted me. They'd want me just twice as much if you were my wife. I repeat, together we can make things hum. You won't be bored to tears if you marry me. And as for Oakland, well, I've about made up my mind to tackle San Francisco, if you'll tackle it with me.'

He tried to take her hand, perceiving that he had made an impression, but at this moment Mrs. Spragge, followed by George, appeared on the front porch. Hazel said hurriedly:

'I can't answer you now.'

They rose from the bench as Mrs. Spragge approached.

Introductions followed, and a stifled ejaculation from George.

'What is it?' asked Hazel.

'Nothing,' replied George.

He was staring at the precious water—liquid gold at that season of the year. Thousands of gallons had been wasted.

'Gracious,' murmured Hazel. 'I forgot.'

Mrs. Spragge smiled grimly.

CHAPTER XII.

PIZZICATO.

I.

WILBUR wisely decided not to press Hazel for a decision, nor indeed did he find an opportunity of speaking to her alone after the midday meal, during which he made himself vastly agreeable to the Spragges, recognising in Mrs. Spragge those great qualities which distinguish the woman of the West from the woman *in* the West. Mrs. Spragge was of California, a part of the State, racy of the soil and sunshine, a square peg firmly driven into a square hole. George,

too, attracted him, because his head appeared to be as level as his mother's. He supposed that Hazel had known these good worthy people for years ; they might be remotely connected with her. He himself was proud of relations of the same sturdy type who lived in the Mendocino backwoods. He felt sincerely grateful to the Spragges and their Canyon because Hazel looked so enchantingly alive and vigorous. High health, he reflected, ought to be as contagious as disease.

Hazel, on her part, appreciated Wilbur's delicacy and tact, although she was uncomfortably aware that he would not leave Aguilas until he had imposed something in the nature of an ultimatum. He promised to return to the Canyon on the morrow. Meanwhile he was anticipating a business talk with Adolf Goldenheimer. Twenty years before there had been a landing just below George's clam beach. Wheat from the plains behind the Coast Range had been shipped at a small wharf, which was 'frozen out' by the railroad, that mighty octopus. To-day, the dairymen, the squatters who raised early potatoes and vegetables, the fruit men, and, in fine, everybody who had anything to sell in distant markets, were in the tentacles of the monster, who pinched them mercilessly. According to Wilbur, the old landings along the coast might be raised from the dead if a new generation could be made to see how vital such a resurrection was to their interests.

George, however, divined the truth. In his slow-working, shrewd mind he dismissed all Wilbur's talk of landings as 'poppy-cock.' A slick talker from Oakland was after Hazel.

This fact gnawed at his heart, making him abjectly miserable. Of course he leapt to the conclusion that Hazel liked Wilbur, because she had forgotten to shut off the water. He had impressed upon her the value of water when the creek was running dry. Wilbur had swept all thought of George and his interests clean out of her mind.

It racked him to think of his foolish promise not to rush things, to wait for a nod from her pretty head. It racked him to more poignant pangs when he realised that Wilbur was a talker, able to talk the heart out of a girl, or the tail off a dog ! He told himself wretchedly that Hazel was not satisfied with him as he was. She disliked his rough speech. She wanted to 'make him over.'

Even in small things he was out of luck. Three nights in succession he had 'sat up' for a buck which slaked its thirst elsewhere.

To-night he meant to try again. The odd conviction came to him that if he got the buck he would get Hazel also. The rattlesnakes, too, were harder to capture. He had secured seven beauties, big fellows with many rattles, but he wanted another half-dozen to make the promised tale complete.

When Wilbur drove away, George took his sack and forked stick into the hills, leaving Hazel with the womenfolk. To avoid awkward questions, he sneaked from the house by the back way, but, unfortunately, Hazel caught a glimpse of him, and once more curiosity consumed her.

There must be something secret connected with George.

She tried to pump Samantha, a process quite as futile as trying to coax water out of the Arizona desert! Samantha's curt: 'Search me!' aggravated her beyond endurance.

Mrs. Spragge happened to be busy in the kitchen making strawberry jam. Samantha sat sewing with Hazel. Rivalry indicated itself in the work undertaken by each girl. Samantha stitched away at a stout flannel petticoat. The mere sight of it in July provoked perspiration. Hazel, somewhat ostentatiously, was threading baby-riband into her filmiest and prettiest underclothing. More, the very nature of Samantha's task, not to mention Mrs. Spragge's, adumbrated careful provision for the future rather than the present. Hazel became irritably sensible that work on a ranch was concerned with the future rather than the present. It was difficult to enjoy that present, because the future exacted such never-ending consideration. Mrs. Spragge was sweltering in the kitchen, because jam came in handy when ripe fruit was out of season. In the dog days, thick flannel petticoats had to be fashioned because it might be bitterly cold in January!

Samantha eyed the pale blue baby-riband with smouldering contempt. Was Hazel 'fixing up' for George or Mr. Stocker? Like George, she never doubted the true reason of Mr. Stocker's advent, but, unlike George, she dismissed as grossly improbable the chance of Mr. Stocker being preferred to George. The city dude had come to the Canyon on a damfool errand. That was her summing-up.

Each girl was aware of the other's suppressed hostility. Hazel had guessed long ago that Samantha wanted George, and at first this sad fact had provoked pity and sympathy. But since the fiasco of the Fourth these sweet feelings had turned sour, because Hazel had read derision and contempt in Samantha's eyes.

Samantha deemed her unfit to become George's wife! What impudence! What ignorance! She pictured George married to Samantha, each degenerating, each going to seed. Samantha would ruin George, kowtow to him, deny herself everything for him, work her fingers to the bone for him, and keep him at her level for ever and ever. What could such a girl know of the higher ideals? Nothing!

Certainly life was horribly muddled.

It occurred to her that the real right thing in the interests of the race—she had 'taken' half a dozen invaluable lessons in eugenics—would be for Samantha to marry Wilbur Stocker. She was a first-class housekeeper, and would bear him strong children; she would never dream of interfering with his business.

Presently they fell into desultory talk. Hazel could not resist the temptation to 'stir up' Samantha; she wanted to try on, so to speak, certain ideas loosely basted together. Such talk was excellent practice, and much encouraged in social circles in Oakland.

'What did you think of Mr. Stocker?' she asked brightly.

'Ain't he your friend?' murmured Samantha.

'Certainly; but that needn't prevent our talking about him with entire frankness. I enjoy a good gossip about my friends. Gossip is a sign of an intelligent interest in one's fellow-creatures. Don't you think so?'

'Mebbe.'

'I am quite sure it is. Now, how did Mr. Stocker impress you?'

'Kind o' thin.'

Hazel laughed. Poor Wilbur was thin compared with the stalwart George.

'Works his tongue overly much,' suggested Samantha. 'Terrible talker! I mind me of a shote we had year before last. It usefer run about squeakin' an' squealin' all the time, even when th' others was at the trough. It never fattened any. It jest up an died.'

Hazel laughed again. Samantha always amused her. But the laughter failed to ring quite true. It occurred to Hazel for the first time that poor Wilbur was significantly thin. If she married him, and if he 'up and died,' what then?

'His talk is not thin, Samantha.'

'Ain't it? I couldn't foller all of it. Seems to hev good

business sense. Adolf Geldenheimer 'll meet his match this afternoon.'

'Did you listen to what Mr. Stocker said about Spragge's Canyon?'

Samantha hesitated.

'I dunno as I did, Hazel. What kin he know of our ranch anyways?'

'You are so literal. Of course he knows nothing of your ranch in the sense you mean. But he knows everything in another sense.'

'As how?'

'He meets you for the first time, and, believe me, first impressions are immensely valuable, particularly to a woman.'

'But Mr. Stocker ain't a woman.'

'There's something of the woman in him, as there ought to be—a quickness of perception, an intuition essentially feminine. Well, he meets you all, and he sees that you are astonishingly healthy and happy.'

'Sees all that at onct, does he?'

'Of course he does. Then he sees a well-ordered little house, good plain food on the table—a ranch run properly.'

'He saw a lot o' water runnin' to waste.'

'That was entirely my fault. What was I going to say?'

'Search me,' said Samantha stolidly.

Hazel grew nettled. The repetition of this stupid bit of slang put her ideas to flight. With some difficulty she recaptured them.

'Oh, yes. Mr. Stocker grasped the lesson that Spragge's Canyon teaches.'

'I want to know!'

'It's a small world in itself, almost self-supporting.'

'Almost?'

'It is self-supporting.'

'More'n that.'

'You're missing my point, Samantha. In its tiny way this ranch is complete.'

'No, it ain't. You ask Auntie 'bout that.'

Hazel skated swiftly across this thin ice. She knew what Mrs. Spragge wanted to make her home complete.

'I mean, speaking generally, that there's not much more to be done here.'

'Does Mr. Stocker say that?'

Samantha's tone was sharp ; her placidity vanished.

' You heard what he said when he congratulated Mrs. Spragge and George upon having made the most—the *most*, mind you—of their opportunities. What did you infer from that ? '

' I thought he was layin' it on a bit thick.'

' Mr. Stocker is sincerity itself. He meant exactly what he said, and he's right. With his business snap and experience he saw that the creative work to be done here has been done, and well done. A really active, enterprising man could not find in your Canyon sufficient scope for his energies.'

Hazel paused. She felt pleased with herself. The right words had flowed freely. She regretted that Wilbur was absent, because he shared with her a nice enthusiasm in pursuit of the elusive phrase. They had belonged to the same Browning Society. Together they had wrestled with the poet's obscurities ; together they had gloried in an enlarged vocabulary.

To her utter amazement, Samantha said fiercely :

' You want to snake George outer Spragge's Canyon ? '

This was positively archaic, of the primal clay, but Hazel was too proud, and too assured of her own cleverness, not to reply quietly, with dignity :

' As George's true friend, I want to see him grow to his full stature.'

' I call it—wicked, sinfully wicked.'

' Let us discuss it temperately.'

' I can't. I can't discuss it at all with you. I ain't got no words, only feelings. If you tempt George from Spragge's Canyon, yer a wicked girl, an' a fullish one too. There ! '

II.

As she spoke she jumped up, letting the flannel petticoat fall to the floor. Hazel rose also, very pale and trembling. Samantha reminded her of a heifer who, some days previously, without any provocation, had tried to hook George in the cow corral. Samantha was tossing her head, like the heifer, and stamping with rage. For an instant Hazel thought that she was about to be assaulted.

Hazel recovered self-possession. With a faint smile, and a hardly perceptible shrug of the shoulders, she moved towards the front door, intending to retire discreetly. Samantha said shortly :

' No, ye don't.'

'Please let me pass. I think you have been very rude, but I make allowances.'

'I'm not through yet,' said Samantha. 'I'm goin' ter call Aunt Almiry.'

Before Hazel could protest, Samantha had done so in a loud clear voice. Mrs. Spragge's heavy step was heard in the hallway; the door opened, and she appeared. For an instant she looked steadily at each girl; then Samantha spoke:

'Hazel Goodrich means to snake George outer this. I taxed her with it, and she owned up. I allowed you ought ter know, I've jest told Hazel that she's wicked and fullish.'

'Hev you?' said Mrs. Spragge. 'I reckon you forgot 'bout Hazel bein' our guest.'

'It's all right, Mrs. Spragge,' murmured Hazel.

'No, it ain't, not if you meant it. Did you?'

'This ranch is too small for George.'

'If you could snake him out, you'd do it?'

'Yes.'

'You think ye know my son better'n I do?'

Hazel made no reply. Mrs. Spragge continued deliberately:

'I suspicioned this some days ago. I surmised you was layin' back fer a brush with George, but I did not think you'd take us on first.'

Hazel said politely:

'I'd rather not discuss the matter with Samantha and you.'

'But you must. We'll hev it out now.'

'Two to one!'

'Samanthy, you go into the kitchen. When I heard you callin', I took the preservin'-pan—off the stove. Go, put it on agen.'

Samantha hesitated, but obeyed. As she was crossing the threshold, she turned to fire a Parthian shot.

'Guest or no guest, Hazel Goodrich, yer a-doin' Satan's work!'

Samantha vanished, slamming the door.

III.

'Sit ye down,' said Mrs. Spragge. She picked up the flannel petticoat, and brushed some dust from it. When Hazel sank rather limply into a chair, Mrs. Spragge seated herself, and began work on the petticoat as if nothing had happened. Hazel said desperately:

'Isn't the thing too personal to be discussed ?'

'What ain't personal to me ain't worth discussin' !'

Mrs. Spragge went on sewing. Hazel sat with her small hands folded on her lap, waiting for her hostess to begin. The whole affair had suddenly become intolerably distasteful and stupid. She blamed herself because she ought not to have invited an expression of opinion from Samantha. As Mrs. Spragge seemed to be absorbed in the flannel petticoat, Hazel murmured gently :

'I'm sorry, very sorry, that I provoked this outburst.'

'But—you—done—it.'

'Yes, I know. Samantha is right; I am foolish, but not wicked.'

'Fullish people air often wicked without knowin' it.'

By this time Hazel wanted peace at any price, but she was not to have it. Lightly had she embarked upon this discussion; heavily indeed was it fated to end. Mrs. Spragge had assumed a judicial air which at another time might have amused Hazel. In a moment wisdom, like Minerva, would burst from her Olympian head.

'I warned you,' said Mrs. Spragge solemnly, 'that you'd never make my George over to suit your idees, unless they happened to be his. An,' she paused dramatically, 'yer idees, Hazel, ain't his, an' never will be.'

Much nettled, Hazel replied :

'Time will determine that.'

Mrs. Spragge's face remained singularly placid.

'I know what yer idees air, and I'm goin' to give ye mine.'

'Please !'

'I've come by 'em, sech as they air, honestly.'

'Do you mean that—'

'Tch ! Tch ! I mean, child, that I've paid for 'em, that my idees ain't taken from other people, nor from books. I'm fifty-five, more'n double yer age, an' with fifty times yer experience.'

'Surely experience can be borrowed ?'

'Mighty seldom; never by young girls ! Now, look ye here ! You believe in the "git up and git thar" gospel, don't ye ?'

'I do.'

'Wal, it works out fine if ye do git thar. S'pose ye don't ?'

'There must be failures, of course.'

'Too many. This country's full of 'em. Yer friend Mr. Stocker was talkin' at noon to-day about processions. He aims ter lead processions, don't he ?'

'He's managing director of a fine business.'

'Is that so? I suspicioned that something ailed him. He looks, pore feller! mighty near foundered. He may be leadin' processions, but he won't process long, because he ain't built for a stayer.'

This was very unpleasant. Once before Hazel had been vouchsafed a vision of herself at rest in a casket lined with white satin. As Mrs. Spragge spoke, she beheld poor Wilbur as the principal but not the most attractive figure in *his* last procession. Little did Mrs. Spragge guess that her argument against the 'git up an' git thar' gospel would be personally applied by Hazel, weaning her reason from the advantages of a marriage with the manager of a big business, and inflaming her instinct to link herself with one who might possibly founder in Mammon's quicksands, but never in health and vitality.

She said patiently:

'Shall we leave Mr. Stocker out of this?'

'Cert'ny. But he pints a moral. Our cities is full of jest sech men, sorter nickel-in-the-slot machines. They hev ther uses. I'd be the last ter deny it. But the most of 'em end on the dumpheap. Nature scraps 'em!'

Hazel was much impressed, and well she might be, for this strong massive woman spoke out of the fullness of a great heart, with a force of feeling which the girl could neither measure nor resist.

'Now my George—'

Mrs. Spragge paused. Her voice grew tender and persuasive. Hazel acknowledged instantly its quality. She knew that the mother was thinking of the baby who had clung to her breasts, of the child she had taught to toddle, of the boy in whose strength she had exulted, of the young man who had filled her widowed heart with gratitude and happiness. Was this George drifting out of her life, beyond her ken, never to return to her?

Mrs. Spragge continued:

'My George ain't ambitious as you be. That's jest whar I come in. I've learned him, ever sence he was short-coated, to look fer happiness to home. He found it, till you come, right here in this Canyon. I've learned him not to borer money nor trouble. One generally means t'other. I've learned him ter save his dollars agen the hard times which never pass any man by. I've learned him ter take his pleasures in the hills, huntin' deer an' quail, studyin' wild things, instead of in the saloons an' back o' stores. I've learned

him, Hazel, that it's a bigger thing ter do a small job right than a big job wrong. Air you goin' ter unpick my stitches ?' She paused again with dramatic intensity, adding fiercely : ' *Air ye ?*'

IV.

Hazel began to cry, a form of self-indulgence which—as she was well aware—did not disfigure her. Samantha, after much weeping, displayed red swollen lids, pale puffy cheeks, and a general air of disintegration. Hazel's tears trickled slowly down her pink cheeks to be collected by a dainty handkerchief. She looked piteous and pensive; her maiden's bosom rose and fell; her red lips pouted seductively. At school and high-school, Hazel's tears had dissolved many difficulties, especially when they arose between her and teachers of the miscalled sterner sex.

She may have hoped that tears would float her gently out of this very tight place into which she had wandered. To her dismay Mrs. Spragge took no notice of them. Her eyes appeared to be fixed upon that hateful flannel petticoat; her fingers stitched diligently, not so swiftly as Samantha's, but even more steadily. Hazel dabbed at her cheeks with an eight-inch square of cambric. Tears no longer welled into her eyes; an angry flame dried the few that sparkled upon her thick lashes.

‘I want to do what is right,’ she affirmed with vehemence. ‘I am not thinking of myself at all.’

‘That's fine,’ said Mrs. Spragge drily.

‘I cannot help my ideas being different from yours and Samantha's. I respect your ideas, and I thought you would respect mine. I've been taught to respect other people's ideas. I belong to a society that meets once a month on Sunday evenings. We select some topic of general interest; and we invite two persons to approach it from opposite view-points. We listen to both sides. I always take in the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner*. I've tried to keep my mind open.’

‘To—what ?’

‘To—to a right conviction, of course.’

‘That's good. How do you know that it is—right ?’

Hazel found herself wriggling, an indication of weakness which she despised. This cross-examination began to distress her. She remembered that Clinton Tarrant had just such a knack of posing exasperating questions. On that account, she disliked the Berkeley

crowd, and kept aloof from them. Men and women of the world did not ask such questions.

She replied feebly : 'One feels that it is right.'

'You *feel*, then, that it's right fer George ter quit his home, because you *feel* that it's too small fer him ?'

'Well, yes. A man like George might become Governor of the States.'

'Sakes alive ! Politics ?'

Her mere pronunciation of the word was eloquent of what Mrs. Sprague thought of politics.

'Why not ? A business man can't ignore politics.'

'George hates 'em like pizon.'

Hazel retorted irritably :

'It's like this, Mrs. Spragge. I believe sincerely that George is living in a small circle which will grow smaller. You think otherwise. And there it is. We must agree to disagree.'

'Yer only thinking of George ?'

'I am.'

'Then you love him ?'

Hazel grew scarlet. She told herself that this was outrageous. How dared this woman ask such a leading question ?

'You have no right to ask that.'

'Yes, I hev, too. I'm his mother. If you do love George—if my boy is the dearest thing on this earth to you, dearer than yerself, Hazel, why then I'll admit yer right to interfere with his life. If you don't love him, quit foolin' with what isn't yours.'

Hazel drew in her breath sharply. In the expressive language of the West, she was 'up against it.' A retreat seemed ignominious. Cornered at last, stung to desperation, she exclaimed defiantly :

'I do love him !'

'Does he know it ?'

'No ; that's why I resent your asking such a question.'

'Well, he shan't know it from me, dear. You can take yer own time to tell him.' She sighed heavily, and her voice lost something of its dominating power. 'It ain't certain that you kin persuade him to leave Spragge's Canyon ; but if you love him true, and if you feel that 'twill be fer his happiness ter leave his old home, you must act accordin'. It's plain to me that George loves you, an' wants you more'n he's wanted anything else. Because of that I say to you—take keer !'

Her voice was profoundly sad as she ended. Hazel remained

silent, not unmoved herself. Mrs. Spragge carried the flannel petticoat into the kitchen.

Hazel went to her room.

V.

She was angry with all the world—angry with Wilbur because he had been the innocent cause of these ructions, angry with Samantha and Mrs. Spragge because she accused them of violating the sacred rites of hospitality, angry with George because he was wandering about the brush hills instead of entertaining his guest, and, finally, angry with herself because a shrewd but illiterate old woman had worsted her in open argument, and extorted from her a premature avowal of love. Presently, she heard Samantha's step upon the wooden stairs, and then a knock at the door.

‘Come in.’

Samantha entered. Her comely face was ravaged by tempestuous weeping. She stood in the doorway, saying meekly :

‘I beg pardon.’

‘I understand. Not another word—please !’

Samantha continued, in the same crushed voice :

‘Aunt Almiry made me come up before I went to my cows. I was hatefully rude. I know it. I’m sorry.’

Hazel advanced to kiss her.

‘No,’ said Samantha miserably. ‘I can’t kiss an’ be friends—yet. I’m a silly fool, and a nice sight I’ve made o’ myself, but howlin’ allers did make me look ugly an’ feel ugly. I feel worse’n I look.’

She disappeared, going downstairs, back to her cows. Hazel felt unaffectedly sorry for her, a sorrow deepened by the reflection that poor Samantha couldn’t feel worse than she looked. She examined her own face exhaustively, trying to discover what effect the emotions of the afternoon had had upon her. After five not unpleasant minutes she decided that violent emotion affected her inwardly.

She wrote a long letter to the good aunt, telling her to expect an affectionate niece at any moment. After describing the barbecue in her lightest vein, she devoted a few lines to Wilbur.

‘. . . Wilbur’ (she wrote) ‘appeared unexpectedly this morning. Pray don’t jump to the conclusion that he came to see me. He is, as usual, engrossed by business, and talks of landings

with anybody who is kind enough to listen to him. I am rather anxious about him. He is painfully thin. It struck me to-day, quite shockingly, that his is *not* a good life. Isn't that how the insurance agents put it?

'Auntie mine, I am getting a wee bit homesick . . .'

Having finished her letter, Hazel selected a book, 'Poems of Passion,' by Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox. This daintily bound volume had been bought after meeting George. Hazel carried it to the open window and sat down. She glanced at the watch she wore upon her wrist. It was chore-time. George was overdue at the barn. Her mind dwelt lingeringly upon chores which had to be done, even if the heart were breaking. It occurred to her that this might be a theme worthy of Mrs. Wilcox. Had poets ever done chores? Would not the doing of chores kill the poetic gift? Joaquin Miller, for example, living a hermit's life, had shewn kindred souls how the doing of chores might be brought to the irreducible minimum. Thus musing, she reflected that George would never expect her to feed hogs or milk cows.

George appeared.

He was lost to sight as he crossed the creek. When he appeared again, he paused for an instant, glancing about him, so Hazel thought, stealthily. Then he advanced swiftly towards the house. He could not see Hazel, although he had glanced up at her window, because she was sitting behind a thick muslin curtain. He reached the porch, when she called to him—

'Oh, George!'

Yes, at sound of her voice he started, pausing irresolutely.

'That you, Hazel?'

'Any luck?'

He answered cheerily:

'Might be worse. Come across the fresh track of a big buck.'

Obviously, he was trying to lure her attention from the sack, which was not empty. He nodded carelessly, tramped up the steps, and entered his 'den.' Hazel distinctly heard the click of a key turning raspingly in a lock.

Now why, in the name of the Sphinx, should George lock himself into his evil-smelling room?

(To be continued.)

THE GREY SEALS OF HASKEIR.

To the Editor of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SIR,—You have, without doubt, seen that the Grey Seals (Protection) Bill has passed its third reading in the House of Lords.

I cannot easily express my satisfaction at this happy result, which we owe to the Editor of the CORNHILL and Mr. Charles Lyell, M.P.

Mr. Lyell read an article in the CORNHILL of July 1913, in which some first-hand details were given as to the butchery of grey seals that is perpetrated yearly on certain lonely islets off the western coasts of Britain. This butchery is the more to be regretted as it takes place at the breeding time, and when the young are suckling. The young of the grey seal (*Halichærus grypus*) cannot swim until three weeks old; and during this period, therefore, they and their mothers are at mercy of the clubbing parties.

The Bill provides for a close season for grey seals extending from October the 1st to December the 15th.

I wish to offer my sincerest and most hearty congratulations to Mr. Charles Lyell, M.P., and to the Editor of the CORNHILL. Their energy, public spirit, and sympathy have saved, for a time at any rate, the grey seal from extinction; and I believe that naturalists of A.D. 2014 will remember them with gratitude for their efforts to preserve to succeeding generations a creature that is, when all is said and done, the largest—excepting the whales—and one of the most interesting of British mammals.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. HESKETH PRICHARD.

PRAE WOOD, ST. ALBANS :
May 27, 1914.

This generous letter from the lover of Nature who has studied big game from China to Peru, from Patagonia to Labrador, ignores the writer's own share in the achievement of the Grey Seals Bill. Mr. Hesketh Prichard's paper in this Magazine was "the taunt that stung the Legislature into legislating."

ED. CORNHILL.

